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ABSTRACT

This annual publication is intended to help Kentucky parents and citizens stay informed on educational issues and to provide them with information and encouragement to be involved in the education of the children in their community. The guide includes information on the basics of the law for various school programs, Commonwealth Testing System and school assessment, school accountability, assistance, testing results, and what citizens can do to help. Separate chapters provide specific updates on (1) assessment and school accountability; (2) early childhood programs; (3) primary school; (4) reading programs; (5) extended school services; (6) high schools; (7) career and technical education; (8) students with special needs; (9) equal opportunities in education; (10) school-based decision making; (11) family resource and youth service centers; (12) school safety; (13) technology and education; (14) professional development; (15) teacher preparation and the education professional standards board; (16) school finance; (17) governance; (18) alternative school schedules and calendars; and (19) parent involvement. A map of Prichard Committee community support regions concludes the guide. (JPB)

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KENTUCKY SCHOOL UPDATES:

A Parent/Citizen Guide for 2001-02

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INTRODUCTION

Kentucky School Updates: A Parent/Citizen Guide, an annual publication of the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, is intended to help parents and citizens stay up-to-date on educational issues.

We believe informed and involved parents and citizens are critical to school success. Your interest and support encourage students and educators as they work to improve student achievement. Because schools and the rules about them are ever-changing, it is necessary to provide annual updates.

We provide this document as a reference for parents and citizens. The Table of Contents will guide you to specific programs or areas of interest. In most sections, the headings are the basics of the law, what's new, what has happened since 1990 when the Kentucky Education Reform Act was passed, what you can do to get involved, and a list of resources.

We also believe parents and citizens should communicate with elected officials who make decisions about education. We'll leave it to you to find your local school board and school council members, but we've included information in the section on parents called "Stay in contact with your state legislators." We hope you will talk with them about the good things that are happening in your schools as well as the problems you observe.

Many people contributed to this publication including staff members at the Kentucky Department of Education, the Education Professional Standards Board, the Center for School Safety, and the Cabinet for Families and Children. These people provided updated information and reviewed materials for accuracy. We extend our appreciation to those friends, to our staff, and especially to Susan Curtiss who did the final typesetting.

We hope that this guidebook will provide you with information and encouragement to be involved in the education of the children in your community. I invite you to send additional questions or suggestions to me.

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ASSESSMENT AND SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- In Kentucky, **schools are held accountable for student learning** with rewards for success or assistance for failing to meet expectations.

High learning standards have been established for all students and are defined in the following documents:

- **Six student learning goals** were established by the 1990 Kentucky General Assembly and revised in 2000. They establish the basis for student learning. In 1994 the legislature decided that two of the six goals would not be assessed for school accountability.
- The six goals were further defined by the **Council on School Performance Standards** as 75 learner outcomes. In 1994 the Kentucky Board of Education adopted a revised list of **57 Academic Expectations**, which were approved by two legislative committees.
- The **Core Content for Assessment (core content)**, developed in 1994 and revised in 1999, provides lists of content that have been and will continue to be assessed for accountability. It includes reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, arts and humanities, and practical living and vocational studies. Testing in these subjects is required by law. Changes in the *Core Content for Assessment* must be developed through a public process involving parents and citizens. The Core Content should be available at all schools and is on the Department of Education Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us. Core Content Cards offer the same information in an easy-to-use format and are available from the Kentucky Association of School Councils, (859) 238-2188.
- To further define what students should know, the state board has approved the **Program of Studies**, an outline of the minimum content to be taught in Kentucky schools. The Program of Studies differs from the Core Content in that it is more extensive. Schools need to pay attention to both documents as they make curricular decisions.
- Successful school performance also includes student attendance, retention, dropout rates, and successful transition to adult life (college, jobs, or military). These are known as noncognitive or **nonacademic indicators of school success.**

Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS): The Kentucky Board of Education has responsibility for creating and implementing the state assessment and school accountability program to ensure that students are meeting Kentucky's high standards. The 1998 General Assembly required the board to close out the initial system, the Kentucky Instructional Results Information System (KIRIS), and develop a new system, the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS).

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SUMMARY OF KENTUCKY'S TEST

COMPONENT	Existing Primary	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
NORM REFERENCED TEST CTBS in Reading, Math, Language Arts	☆			☆			☆			
WRITING PORTFOLIOS Grade 4 includes 4 pieces • Grades 7 & 12 include 5 pieces		☆			☆					☆
WRITING PROMPT Student chooses 1 of 2 prompts		☆			☆					☆
READING CORE CONTENT 24 Multiple Choice Questions and 6 Open Response Questions		☆			☆			☆		
SCIENCE CORE CONTENT 24 Multiple Choice Questions and 6 Open Response Questions		☆			☆				☆	
MATHEMATICS CORE CONTENT 24 Multiple Choice Questions and 6 Open Response Questions			☆			☆			☆	
SOCIAL STUDIES CORE CONTENT 24 Multiple Choice Questions and 6 Open Response Questions			☆			☆			☆	
ARTS AND HUMANITIES CORE CONTENT 8 Multiple Choice Questions and 2 Open Response Questions			☆			☆			☆	
PRACTICAL LIVING/VOCATIONAL CORE CONTENT 8 Multiple Choice Questions and 2 Open Response Questions			☆			☆		☆		

ONE ADDITIONAL COMPONENT IS BEING DEVELOPED BUT IS NOT CURRENTLY BEING USED:

☆ **LONGITUDINAL COMPARISON will show progress of the same students over time, using data from other components.**

Source: Kentucky Association of School Councils

***Assessment*:** The **Kentucky Core Content Tests** have been created to assess whether students are learning the core content in reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, arts and humanities, and practical living/vocational studies. (See chart on page 2 for a full summary of testing.) They include the following test items:

- ✓ multiple-choice questions
- ✓ open-response questions (require an answer that may include a written explanation, graph, pictures, diagrams, or charts)
- ✓ writing prompts (questions that require longer, more developed writing responses)

- ■ Also included in school accountability:
  - ✓ norm-referenced, multiple choice test (Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills/5 or CTBS/5)
  - ✓ writing portfolios
  - ✓ alternate portfolios N portfolios designed for students with disabilities who cannot participate in the regular curriculum.

- ■ The law also requires **performance assessment events** for schools that have students enrolled in performing arts organizations. Schools with band, chorus, or orchestra that participate in state-sanctioned contests must report results or scores on the school report card. These results will not be used for school accountability.

- ■ A technically sound **longitudinal comparison** of test results, comparing the same students over time is also required by law. This measure has been difficult to create and is still being developed at this time.

- ■ Student work is categorized as novice, apprentice, proficient, and distinguished. In 1999 these levels for reading, mathematics, science, and social studies were expanded to include:
  - ✓ non-performance
  - ✓ medium novice
  - ✓ high novice
  - ✓ low apprentice
  - ✓ medium apprentice
  - ✓ high apprentice
  - ✓ proficient
  - ✓ distinguished

  This allows schools to receive more appropriate credit for student progress.

- ■ Arts and humanities, practical living/vocational, and writing are scored non-performance, novice, apprentice, proficient, and distinguished.

- ■ On advice from the National Technical Advisory Panel, the Kentucky Board of Education agreed to set new performance standards that are clear and appropriate for the new test. Over

1,600 teachers reviewed test items, core content, and student work and made recommendations to the state board for performance standards for novice, apprentice, proficient, and distinguished. At their June 2001 meeting the state board accepted these recommendations.

***School accountability*:** The Kentucky Board of Education has established a system to compare individual school progress in two-year cycles using school tests, portfolios, and nonacademic indicators.

- For the **1998-99 and 1999-2000 school years, an interim accountability system** was used to provide a transition from the old system to CATS. Schools reaching a target score with a drop out rate of lower than 8 percent received rewards in the winter of 2001.

- The **CATS Long-term Accountability Model** uses the combined 1998-99 and 1999-2000 test scores as the baseline accountability index. Beginning with the 2001-02 year, schools will receive rewards or assistance every two years based on progress or lack of progress toward the goal. By 2014 every school will be expected to reach a score of 100 on a scale of 0-140. This fall, each school will receive its own growth chart, showing the progress needed to reach 100 by 2014. That growth chart will appear in each School Report Card. (See sample chart on page 6)

- After the 2001 and 2002 test scores are averaged and compared to the baseline, schools will be categorized as:

  - ✓ **MEETING GOAL** or improving enough to be on target for reaching 100 by 2014
  - ✓ **PROGRESSING** or falling below the meeting goal line but not dropping into the assistance category; any school scoring above 80 is also considered progressing.
  - ✓ **ASSISTANCE,** or dropping below the baseline; schools scoring above 80 will never be placed in the assistance category.

- There is a margin of error band or fairness margin at the goal line and assistance lines that ensures that small schools are not statistically disadvantaged.

***Rewards*:** *There* are four ways for schools to receive financial rewards

- Schools in the **MEETING GOAL** category must maintain a low drop-out rate* and continually reduce the number of students performing at the novice level (the lowest performance category) in formulas determined by the state board to receive a full share of rewards.

- Schools in the **PROGRESSING CATEGORY** that score higher than the previous two-year period, have met a goal for reducing the number of students performing in the novice category, and are meeting drop-out goals, receive a half share of rewards.

*To meet the drop-out requirement, the rate must be at or below 5.3 percent, or have decreased .5 percent from the last dropout rate and still be at or below 6 percent.

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- As schools improve and reach certain scores or **recognition points**, they receive rewards.
- **Pacesetter schools** are those scoring in the top 5 percent of all schools who score at or above the top (or fourth) recognition point. If they have an acceptable dropout rate, have not declined in the past two cycles, and have not received other CATS rewards, they will receive rewards.

Rewards are given to schools for school purposes as determined by the school council (or the principal in schools without a council) and can be used for the school and/or staff bonuses.

***ASSISTANCE*:** Schools in the **ASSISTANCE CATEGORY** are divided into three levels and required to do the following:

Level 1: Schools whose index scores are in the top one third of those in the assistance category:

- ✓ must conduct a scholastic review and self-study with public input, facilitated by the district professional development coordinator;
- ✓ must make the resulting report and recommendations, which will be incorporated in the school improvement plan, available to the public with discussion at the next school council and school board meetings;
- ✓ may apply for school improvement funds but must get school council approval if it decides not to seek these funds;
- ✓ may review the teacher evaluation process and make recommendations to improve the evaluation and professional growth plan.

Level 2: Schools whose index scores fall in the middle one third of those in the assistance category:

- ✓ must conduct a scholastic review and self-study with public input, facilitated by a designee of the Commissioner of Education;
- ✓ must make the resulting report and recommendations, which will be incorporated in the school improvement plan, available to the public with discussion at the next school council and school board meetings
- ✓ may apply for school improvement funds but must get school council approval if it decides not to seek these funds;
- ✓ must review the teacher evaluation process and make recommendations to improve the evaluation and professional growth plan.

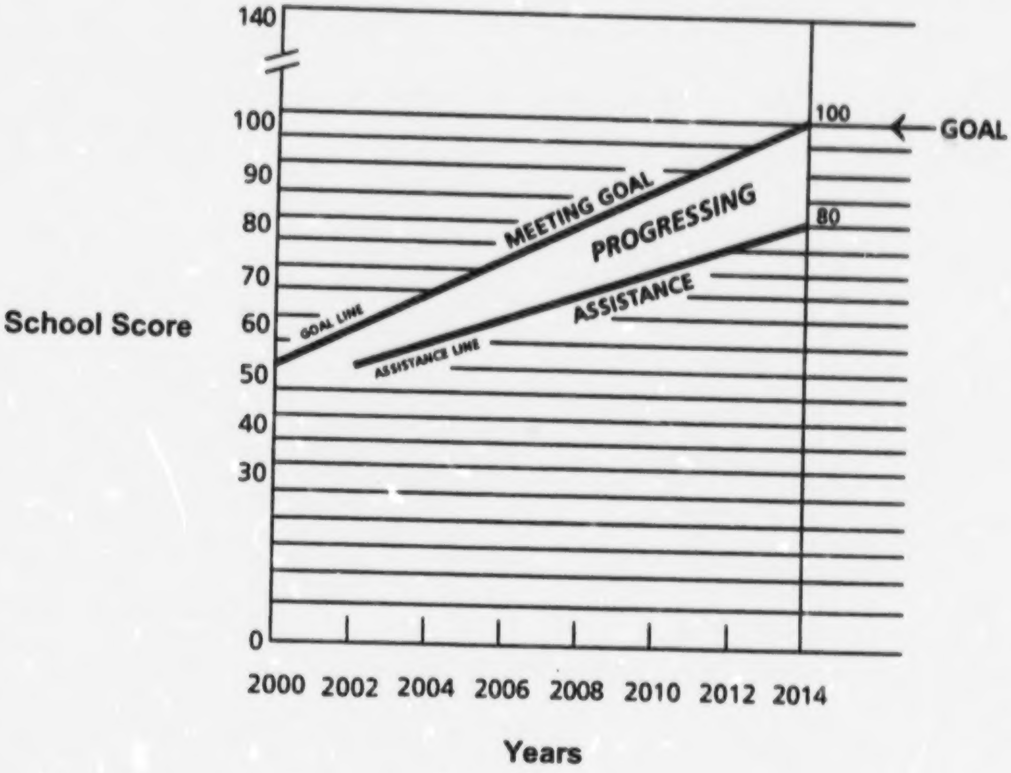
Level 3: Schools whose index scores fall in the bottom one third of those in the assistance category:

- ✓ will receive assistance from a highly-skilled educator;
- ✓ will be subject to a full scholastic audit conducted by a team designated by the state;
- ✓ may apply for school improvement funds but must get school council approval if it decides not to seek these funds;
- ✓ will be subject to teacher evaluation review, recommendations for professional growth plans, and possible additional evaluations, which could lead to dismissal or transfer of principals, teachers, and school council members. Students in schools that remain in Level 3 for two or more consecutive cycles may transfer at district expense to a successful school.

- The **scholastic audit process** is part of the state's mandated assistance for schools program. It is a comprehensive review of a school's learning environment, organizational efficiency, and academic performance of students. The **Standards and Indicators of School Improvement (SISI)** document is used for this review. Results of these audits are used to determine the level of support necessary for continuous improvement of student academic performance. Audit teams include teachers, administrators, and parents.

COMMONWEALTH ACCOUNTABILITY TESTING SYSTEM
Long-term Accountability Model

Each school has a customized chart like this one using its own baseline score, and a goal of 100 by year 2014. This example is a hypothetical school with a baseline of 50. Your school's chart will be included in the next school report card.



***Assuring a Fair System*: Three committees** were established in 1998 to provide guidance to the state board in developing the new system. They include:

- **Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee (EAARS):** an 8-member subcommittee of legislators, appointed by the Legislative Research Commission. Its responsibility is to review administrative regulations, advise the state board on the assessment and accountability system, and provide oversight for the Office of Education Accountability.

- **School Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability Council (SCAAC):** a 17-member group representing educators, local board members, parents, business leaders, and the public, recommended by constituent groups and appointed by the governor. It is charged with studying, reviewing, making recommendations to and advising the Kentucky Board of Education and Legislative Research Commission on academic standards, communication with the public, assessment, accountability, and assistance to schools to improve learning.

- **National Technical Advisory Panel on Assessment and Accountability (NTAPAA):** appointed by the Legislative Research Commission and composed of no fewer than three testing experts. The current panel includes six. Its charge is to advise the Legislative Research Commission, the state board, and the Department of Education regarding assessment and accountability.

- In addition, the state board must also seek the advice of the **Office of Education Accountability.**

- The Department of Education has established a **validation plan** for the Commonwealth Assessment and Testing System and reports to the legislature every three months.

School Report Card

- An annual **school report card** is prepared for each school. The legislature requires schools and school districts to produce a report card that includes information on student academic achievement, attendance, retention, drop-out rates, student transition to adult life, and school learning environment including measures of parental involvement. Other items include: the school's mission statement and goals, enrollment, reports on state contests such as band, orchestra, chorus, and academic competitions, teacher qualifications, school safety information, spending per pupil, pupil/teacher ratio, and availability of technology. Indications of parent involvement include the number of parents attending parent-teacher conferences, voting in school council elections and serving on committees, and the number of parent volunteer hours. The school may report on extracurricular activities, awards, and recognitions. The names of school council members are also included.

- Each school district must publish a **District Report Card**, a summary of all school data, in the newspaper with the largest circulation in the county.

- An **Expanded School Report Card** is also required and offers more details about student performance data broken out by category such as gender, race, and poverty, additional demographic data, and other information that schools want to share. The school report must be available at the school and an **Expanded District Report Card**, providing more data and elements of the district's consolidated plan, must be made available at the district office.

- Schools are required to mail report cards to families or get a waiver to distribute them in another way. They are also available on the parent section of the department's Web site. The expanded school report card will be available at the school.

Other Points of Interest

- Kentucky **teachers** have a significant role in designing the system. They create the test items, have input on revising core content and the program of studies, were responsible for creating and recommending performance standards to the state board, and have been given more opportunity to comment on the development of the CATS system through electronic mail.
- The Board of Education adopted a **Code of Ethics for Appropriate Testing Practices for School and District Personnel** effective January 1997 and revised and renamed it in 1999 to give teachers guidelines for administering state assessments. Copies of the code are available from schools, the district assessment coordinator, or the superintendent. Copies can also be obtained from the Department of Education at (502) 564-4394. Concerns about inappropriate assessment practices should be reported to the Department of Education at (502) 564-2983, or to the Office of Education Accountability at (800) 242-0520. If you call to report a concern, you do not have to give your name. However, it is more difficult for the state to follow up on anonymous reports.
- The department and state board must assist local districts in developing and using **continuous assessment strategies** that provide diagnostic information for students.

RESULTS

School results:

- **Rewards** of over $22.4 million were shared among 711 schools for the interim accountability cycle. School councils determined how the funds were spent. Reward amounts for each school are available on the department's Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us/comm/mediarel/rewards.asp.
- There were 408 schools in the "maintaining" category that did not receive rewards, but did not qualify for assistance. Another 148 schools fell in the assistance category with 51 of those conducting self audits and 99 audited by Department of Education teams. The department reported that in general, schools with low assessment scores that it audited had:
  - ✓ ineffective school councils
  - ✓ gaps in lesson planning and instruction
  - ✓ assessments that did not align with Kentucky goals
  - ✓ ineffective planning
  - ✓ an inability to use assessment data

  - ✓ no alignment of curriculum
  - ✓ professional development that was not related to the school plan
  - ✓ weak use of technology
  - ✓ weak leadership
  - ✓ low expectations for students and adults
  - ✓ a lack of parent involvement.

- According to the department, some of these schools were organized for the adults in the school, not students and learning.

- On the opposite end of the scale, a sample group of successful schools was also visited to see what they were doing to help all students achieve. This is what was found.

  - ✓ Teachers and principals from different grade levels and between schools talked to each other about curriculum.

  - ✓ The school staff and council carefully reviewed student achievement data to identify gaps in learning in curricular areas and gaps in achievement between different groups of students.

  - ✓ Teachers assess students in several different ways and review student work to identify learning gaps.

  - ✓ Teachers work together to align curriculum with core content to be sure all the core content is being taught.

  - ✓ Schools work to be sure every student has equal access to a rich curriculum and schedules are flexible enough to support this policy.

  - ✓ Extended school services, federal programs, and family resource and youth services centers work together in effective ways to support student achievement.

  - ✓ School and district budgets are targeted in effective ways to support student learning.

  - ✓ Professional development is targeted toward student and school learning goals.

  - ✓ Staff evaluations focus on improved teaching.

  - ✓ School leadership is strong.

  - ✓ Schools take consolidated planning seriously, taking school data into consideration.

- Particular areas of concern across the state include middle school progress and lower scores for boys, minority students, students living in poverty, and students with special needs.

Nonacademic results:

- The average drop out rate in Kentucky declined from 5.34 percent in 1998 to 4.97 percent in 1999. This data is reported by gender and race as follows:
    - ✓ Male 5.76
    - ✓ Female 4.03
    - ✓ White 4.76
    - ✓ African American 6.50
    - ✓ Hispanic 7.02

- The rate of retaining students or not passing them on to the next grade increased from 3.71 in 1998 to 4.03 in 1999. Ninth grade students had the highest retention rate at 12.55 in 1999, an increase from 10.41 in 1998. See the nonacademic briefing packet on the department of education Web site for more details.

- The percent of students enrolling in college in Kentucky increased from 45.7 in 1998 to 46.0 in 1999 with college out-of-state slightly decreasing from 1998 (6.8%) to 1999 (6.7%). The percent going on to school and work combined increased from 5.9 to 6.3 in those same years. The percent going to vocational/technical schools decreased from 4.9 percent in 1998 to 4.3 percent in 1999.

Other testing:

- The **National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)** is a standards-based test that provides national comparisons. It has been administered to a sample of Kentucky students in fourth and eighth grade reading, writing, mathematics, and science. In reading, at Grades 4 and 8, Kentucky students are above the national average. In mathematics and science Kentucky students are within one to four points of the national average. In writing at Grade 8 Kentucky scores are not significantly different from the nation. For more information check the National Center for Education Statistics Web site at http://nces.ed.gov/nationalreportcard/states.

- The number of students taking the **American College Test (ACT)** in preparation for college increased from 62 percent of graduates in 1990 to 71 percent in 2000. The number of students taking the recommended core classes for college has grown from 28 percent in 1994 to 44 percent in 1999. The average score (on a scale of 1 to 36) has remained about the same in the last ten years. The average score in Kentucky in 2000 was 20.1; in the southeastern states it was 20; nationally it was 21.

- Since 1997 national **norm-referenced tests** (CTBS/5) have been given to students statewide in the last year of primary (formerly grade three) and grades six and nine to provide parents with information for comparing their child's scores with similar students around the nation. The reading, language arts, and mathematics survey editions of the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills/5 (CTBS/5) have been used. The results of these tests have **not** been used for school accountability. They will be used to establish the new baseline and then will be included in accountability scores for CATS. On this **norm-referenced** test, a student's results are compared to scores of a group of similar students who took the test in the spring of 1996 who set a national "norm." The score reported to parents tells how their child did compared to the norm. For example, a score of 55 means the student did as well as or better than 55 percent of the normed group. Average Kentucky scores remained about the same in the first three years with a significant increase in the fourth year for the end of primary (grade 3) students.

- Two studies show that **student writing** has improved since portfolios have been required. College freshmen were judged to have stayed the same or improved in basic writing skills and improved in understanding the writing process. Fourth grade student writing has improved overall in quality; spelling errors have declined. Knowledge of punctuation and grammar rules has not changed much since 1990.

- Although school scores have improved on the Kentucky assessments, the average score or index is well below the 100-point goal. In Kentucky, high standards have been established for students, and the new assessments measure what students know and can do compared to that high expectation. There is still tremendous improvement to be made.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Test scores for 2001 will be given to schools and districts by September 15. They will be released to the public October 1.

- Expect more conversation about achievement gaps between different groups of students.

- **School report cards** will be available in January.

- In 2002, tests will be given between April 15 and April 26. See the chart on page 2 for the subjects, grades, and type of assessments to be administered.

- **Students with disabilities,** who meet certain requirements, participate in the alternate portfolio program or are given special assistance, as long as that assistance is prescribed in their individual education plan and used in instruction. For example, a student with an orthopedic handicap who physically cannot write or type but who has the mental capacity to take the test, would have a scribe who could write answers dictated by the student.

- Expect students to be writing. Writing must be a part of the curriculum in all grades to spread the responsibility for teaching writing across the grades. **Portfolios** of student writing should be kept throughout each school year with the best pieces selected prior to submission of the final portfolio in the spring of grades four, seven, and 12.

- Students will continue to get individual **report cards**. State law does not require state assessment scores to affect students' grades or ability to graduate, but local school boards may adopt policies requiring completion of these assessments for high school graduation. Some teachers may include portfolio or state assessment items in grading their students.

Some colleges are using portfolios for placement in writing or math classes.

- College entrance officials are showing increased interest in student writing and problem solving. The **Scholastic Aptitude Test II (SAT II)** includes a writing component. The SAT also focuses on problem-solving skills through open-ended mathematics questions, which require students to calculate their own responses and provide a rationale, similar to Kentucky's performance assessments.
- New national testing requirements may be established, but it is not clear exactly what that means for Kentucky students. Watch for more information in the future.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- **Carefully review your school report card and expanded school report**. Talk with the principal and teachers about your school's strengths and weaknesses and what is being done to improve learning in your school.
- **Ask** your school to hold meetings to review and discuss the assessment data on the school report card and the expanded report card. Ask what is being done to improve student achievement.
- **Order a copy** of *Each and Every Child: Your Guide to Testing and School Accountability in Kentucky*. Check the Prichard Committee Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org for more information or call (800) 928-2111 or Lexington area (859) 233-9849.
- **Get a copy** of *Testing in Kentucky Part I: The Assessment* and *Testing in Kentucky Part II: Accountability*, special publications from the Kentucky Department of Education. Copies are available from the Department, (502) 564-3421 or on their Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.
- **Ask** to review your **School Consolidated Plan** to see what your school is doing to help all students improve academic achievement. Look to see how school assessment data has been used to plan for improved student learning.
- If your child was in grades 3 to 11 last year, assessment results will be available in the fall. **Make an appointment** with your child's teacher to discuss your child's progress. **Remember**, one test is not sufficient to tell you how your child is doing. Ask to see results of all tests, samples of homework, portfolio items, and classroom work. Ask what strengths and weaknesses your child demonstrates in the classroom and what you can do to help.
- **Talk** with students and teachers about portfolios. Ask if writing is being incorporated throughout the curriculum in all grades. Ask students how they will decide what goes into their final portfolios.
- If your school has a PTA/PTO/PTSA, **request** a program on assessment, curriculum and instruction, core content, or writing portfolios to help parents understand what to expect and

how to help. If you do not have a PTA/PTO, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office at (502) 564-4378 for help.

★ **Recognize the contributions** of teachers and administrators. Let them know you appreciate the amount of work it takes to adjust instruction and curriculum to help students acquire the skills needed for Kentucky's assessments. Changing classroom practices requires teachers and administrators to think differently about what they do, and it takes time and effort.

★ **Write** to your elected officials with specific examples of successes or difficulties with the state assessment program. See page 81 to learn how to contact state legislators.

★ **Attend** local school council and school board meetings and ask about plans to improve student performance and provide teacher training.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Association of School Councils**, (859) 238-2188 for Core Content Cards
- **Kentucky Department of Education,** at (502) 564-3421 or (800) 533-5372 or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us .
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849, Lexington area or (800) 928-2111; email: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.
- The **Regional Service Center** in your area. See pages 62-63 for a list and phone numbers.

NOTES:

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Kentucky school districts are required to offer developmentally-appropriate **early childhood programs** for 4-year-old children at risk of educational failure and 3- and 4-year-old children with disabilities. State funds are used to support these programs.

- To participate as a 4-year-old at-risk student, a child must be eligible for the federal free lunch program. Any child who is 3 or 4 years old, who has a disability, may participate regardless of family income. Based on local policy, other children may enroll if space is available.

- School districts must work with other preschool programs, such as Head Start, to avoid duplication and serve as many 4-year-old children as possible.

- The **Office of Early Childhood Development**, housed in the governor's office, focuses on the needs of Kentucky's youngest children from birth through the early elementary years. It directs implementation of a comprehensive early **childhood initiative** passed by the General Assembly in 2000. It focuses on maternal and child health, home visits to support young families, and the availability and quality of child care.

OTHER PROGRAMS

- **Head Start** is a program funded by the federal government that provides comprehensive child development services (preschool education, health services, health, dental and mental health screening and follow up, parent involvement training, and social services) for 3- and 4-year-old children who come from families whose incomes meet federal guidelines for poverty. Children with disabilities may also be eligible. Thirty-three Head Start programs serve children in all 120 counties in Kentucky.

- **Early Head Start** programs, begun in 1995, provide services to infants and toddlers as well as expectant mothers. There are nine programs in Kentucky and it is expected that this program will expand to serve more areas of the state in the near future.

- **Even Start** is a federally funded program that focuses on literacy services for families at risk and children ages birth through seven whose parents are eligible for adult education. There are 23 counties in Kentucky offering adult education, parent education and support, and early child development. Grants for the program come through the Department of Education. Call (502) 564-7056 for more information.

- State-funded **Family Literacy Programs** focus on children ages birth through high school and their families. It is available across the state and is funded through the Department for Adult Education and Literacy. For more information, call (502) 564-5114.

- The **Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy (KIFL)** was established to improve and expand family literacy services in Kentucky. It is the result of an effort among several agencies including the National Center for Family Literacy, Cabinet for Families and Children, Workforce Development, Governor's Office, and the Kentucky Department of Education using federal, state, and local funds. The Institute will be managed by the National Center for Family Literacy in Louisville and will have a resource center and provide professional development and training to local family literacy programs and partners. For more information call (502) 584-1133.

- **First Steps: Kentucky's Early Intervention System,** funded through the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), serves children ages birth to three whose development in communication, movement, learning, social growth, emotional growth, and adaptability is delayed. For more information call (800) 442-0087.

- **The Child Care Resource and Referral Network** is a group of 14 regional agencies that can help parents find local child care services. For the agency closest to you, contact the Kentucky Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies at (502) 223-5002.

RESULTS

- All of Kentucky's 176 school districts provide preschool services. Many districts offer preschool programs in conjunction with Head Start and other programs listed above.

- In 2000-01, 23,591 children or 78 percent of eligible 3- and 4-year-olds were served. This number includes 10,918 children ages 3 and 4 with disabilities. In 1989-90 (prior to the enactment of the Kentucky Preschool Program), only 29 percent of eligible children were served by Head Start or other state programs.

- A nine-year research study on the state's preschool program, begun in 1991 by the University of Kentucky, demonstrates that the program is reducing the achievement gap between at-risk children and their classmates. The Kentucky Preschool Program produces similar positive outcomes for all groups of children regardless of their race or gender. Findings indicated that the Kentucky Preschool Program has a positive effect on children's development during preschool, their readiness for kindergarten, and their social and academic progress through the fifth grade. Middle school surveys indicate that the children who attended the preschool program continue to do as well and in some cases better than a random group of their peers.

- Ten universities now offer a teacher preparation program in **Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (IECE).** In 2000-01, 19.3% of the preschool teachers were IECE certified. As of 2004-05, all newly hired preschool teachers must meet the correct teacher certification standards.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Watch for information about implementation of the Governor's early childhood initiative. Visit the Web site at http://www.state.ky.us.agencies/gov/ecd/index.htm.

- Students identified as at-risk who attend preschool programs should do as well as other children in student performance measures.

- Any young child with disabilities or whose development is delayed should be eligible for one of the many programs available.

- Parent involvement should continue to be an important part of early childhood programs.

- Research on brain development in the first years of a child's life is being widely shared in an effort to encourage more parents to learn how to help their child's development.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Promote** the importance of early childhood programs by getting a copy of newspaper ads prepared by the Partnership for Kentucky Schools, and sharing them with your local paper or other civic newsletters. See below for contact information.

★ If you have a child attending one of these preschool programs, **join** the parent committee associated with it.

★ **Ask** teachers about their observations of students who attended a preschool program as compared to students who did not.

★ If you have a child or know of children who might be eligible for these programs, call your **local board of education** office or the offices listed below for more information.

★ **Visit** preschool, Head Start, Early Head Start, Even Start, or First Steps for Family Independence programs in your community.

★ If teachers in your program are conducting home visits to their students, **ask** how these visits help prepare children for school.

★ If your school has a PTA/PTO, **find out** what it can do to support preschool programs and the families of children who will be entering your primary school. Suggest a mentoring or partnering program for preschool parents or a program that provides preschool children with materials in the summer to prepare them for learning.

★ **Invite a speaker to your school or civic club**. Speakers are available to talk about brain research and the importance of quality child care and schooling in infancy and early childhood. Contact the Department of Education's Early Childhood Branch for information at (502) 564-7056.

★ **Volunteer** to help a teacher in a preschool program. Offer to read to children.

★ **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask school board members how the programs are working in your district and whether every eligible child is being served. Encourage central office staff members to share the local data they have collected about this program.

★ **Write** or call your elected officials with specific examples of successes and difficulties. See page 81 for information on contacting state legislators.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies**, Kentucky Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, (502) 223-5002.
- **First Steps,** Cabinet for Health Services, (800) 442-0087.
- **Head Start** Collaboration Office, (502) 564-4403.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Early Childhood Branch/Preschool**, (502) 564-7056 or visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us/osle/extend/preschool.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Even Start/Family Literacy**, Early Childhood Branch, (502) 564-7056.
- **Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy**, (502) 584-1133 x184.
- **National Center for Family Literacy**, (502) 584-1133.
- **Office of Early Child Development**, Office of the Governor, (502) 564-2611 ext. 457.
- **Department for Adult Education and Literacy**, (502) 564-5114.
- **Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org or visit the Web site at www.pfks.org
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence,** P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.

NOTES:

PRIMARY SCHOOL

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Kentucky law requires schools to create **primary school programs** for all students kindergarten through grade three.

- The law lists the following **critical attributes** in further defining primary school:
  - ✓ **developmentally-appropriate educational practices** or teaching in ways children learn best according to their age and development
  - ✓ **multiage and multiability classrooms** or having children of different ages and abilities working together
  - ✓ **continuous progress** or allowing children to work and progress at their own pace, not having to wait for other children to catch up or be pressured because other children are waiting for them
  - ✓ **authentic assessment** or the ongoing documentation of what students actually learn and do in their day-to-day activities
  - ✓ **qualitative reporting methods** or letting parents know what students know and can do in a way that focuses on the growth and development of the whole child
  - ✓ **professional teamwork** or teachers and other staff members working together to help students learn
  - ✓ **positive parent involvement** or involving parents in positive ways to support student learning

- In a **primary school program**, the curriculum matches the individual student's ability without regard to a specific grade level. The program is intended to help **all** students progress at their own pace. That includes children who are gifted, have learning differences or disabilities, are at risk for educational failure, or who have no identified special learning needs.

- School councils (or the school if no council exists) determine the organization of the ungraded primary program including the extent to which multiage groups are necessary. This organization must be based on the critical attributes and the needs of individual students, including the special needs of first year, half-day (kindergarten) students. Changes in the law since 1992 have not altered the basic structure of the primary program or discontinued any of the seven attributes that are critical to implementation of the program.

- School districts are required to collect data on the number of students who take five years to complete the primary program and report it in the annual Demographic Survey. This information is included in the School Report Card.

RESULTS

- Test results on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills for students at the end of the primary program (formerly grade three) showed impressive gains for the first time in 2000, from an average of 50 in 1997 to 55 in 2000. This test measures reading, language, and mathematics. This may be a result of the state's emphasis on reading and the new funding for reading programs in the last two years.

- A survey of educators conducted by the Office of Education Accountability during the 1999-2000 school year, indicates that teachers have more confidence in skills students possess as they enter grade four. In the past, fourth grade teachers voiced concerns that primary students did not have adequate reading, writing, and math skills for fourth grade work.

- About 10 percent of students require more than four years to complete the primary school program (formerly kindergarten through grade three). Prior to Kentucky's education reform in 1990 and the implementation of the primary school program, about 20 percent of students were retained in those same grades.

- An in-depth study of Kentucky primary programs, "Characteristic Effects of Primary Programs," is being conducted.

- The Department of Education has created a guidebook, *Successful Completion of the Primary School Program*, for primary school teachers. It is available on the department's Web site.

- Researchers say the implementation of the primary program varies widely from school to school and classroom to classroom. That is, some teachers have implemented more of the seven critical attributes, and some have implemented them better than others. According to the Primary Demographic Survey 2000 conducted by the Department of Education, about 33 percent of elementary teachers believe schools have gone back to traditional methods of instruction and about 43 percent disagree. This survey also shows that about one third of schools have gone back to separate classes for kindergarten through grade three and about two thirds combine two age groups of students. About three percent combine all four age groups in multiage classrooms.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- ➼ The Kentucky Department of Education is focusing on reaching proficiency by 2014, that is helping every student reach Kentucky's learning standards. There is a strong push to close achievement gaps and help every child learn to read before leaving the primary program. Expect to see more emphasis on school assessment data to identify learning gaps and focus on curriculum and instruction to see that every child succeeds.

- ➼ Each elementary school must implement the primary school program including all of the seven critical attributes. Because there is flexibility in how students are grouped, parents may notice wide variations from classroom to classroom, and school to school. As teachers and school councils work with the primary program and learn more about it, they may make adjustments to improve teaching and learning.

- Classrooms look different from the classrooms most adults experienced.
    - ✓ Tables or desks are moved together, when appropriate, so children can work in small groups.
    - ✓ Children may change groups frequently to meet their own learning needs.
    - ✓ Hands-on material is used to help children learn academic skills and concepts.
    - ✓ Reading areas are arranged where children might sit on the floor or on comfortable furniture.
    - ✓ Students talk together and share things they are learning.
    - ✓ Students are writing more.
    - ✓ Learning centers are created around the basics of science, social studies, and so on.
    - ✓ Children cooperate and work with each other in addition to working on their own individual assignments.
    - ✓ Report cards look different and are more detailed.
    - ✓ Children are encouraged to read lots of books; textbooks may be used less.

- Some schools are using the **Kentucky Elementary Learning Profile (KELP)**, a list of skills students should master in the primary program, as a guide and a report for parents. It is available on the department's Web site.

- Some schools have purchased a curricular program called **Different Ways of Knowing (DWoK)** as they have developed their program, which meets state guidelines.

- Many schools qualify for and have received special reading grants.

- Schools may be using the new **Successful Completion of the Primary School Program** to guide them in assuring that all students who leave the primary program are prepared for fourth grade work. This is available on the department's Web site.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ If you have a child in the primary program, arrange to visit the classroom to observe what is happening. **Attend** parent-teacher conferences and ask how your child is progressing, what you can expect, and how you can help.

★ **Ask** to see a copy of your school's curriculum and the Successful Completion of the Primary School Program. Ask how the school is working to assure that when students leave the primary program they have the skills needed for fourth grade.

★ If you have a preschool child, **attend** information sessions about the primary program and make arrangements to visit some time during the school year.

★ **Ask** your child's teacher what his or her goals are for the year, what you can expect students to learn, and how you can help.

★ **Inform** your community about the needs of primary school aged children by obtaining copies of newspaper ads developed by the Partnership for Kentucky Schools and sharing them with other parents, your local newspaper or civic group newsletters. See below for contact information.

★ **Request** a copy of *One-to-one: a guide to becoming a reading helper in Kentucky*, a reading toolkit from the Partnership for Kentucky Schools (available in January 2002) and use it to work in your community to improve reading skills. See below for contact information.

★ If your school has a school-based decision making council, **ask** council members what they are doing to support implementation of the primary program. Volunteer to be a member of the council committee on the primary program.

★ If you have a PTA/PTO, **ask for or plan a program** to help parents understand primary school programs. If you do not have a PTA/PTO, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office for help at (502) 564-4378.

★ **Encourage** the PTA/PTO, parents, and community to help teachers supply their primary classrooms with a variety of materials for learning.

★ **Volunteer** to be a teacher's aide or tutor in a primary school classroom.

★ **Recognize** the contributions of teachers and administrators. Let them know you appreciate their work in primary school programs.

★ **Communicate with your state legislators** with specific examples of successes or difficulties. See page 81 for ways to contact legislators.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Department of Education, Early Childhood/Primary School Program** at (502) 564-3064 and visit the Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us/osle/extend/primary.
- **Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Web site at www.pfks.org.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.
- The **Regional Service Center** in your area. See pages 62-63 for a list and phone numbers.

READING PROGRAMS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- The **Early Reading Incentive Grant Program** was established by the General Assembly in 1998 to improve reading instruction for primary students reading at low levels.

- The **Early Reading Steering Committee** provides oversight for this program. Its 15 members include two primary teachers, eight university professors, and two individuals with a background and interest in reading and literacy. The commissioner of education, the president of the Council on Postsecondary Education, and the commissioner of the Department for Adult Education and Literacy or their representatives are also members.

- The **Early Reading Incentive Fund** provides competitive, 27-month grants to schools that are distributed by the Department of Education on recommendation of the Steering Committee. These state funds support teachers in the implementation of research-based reading programs and include $4.2 million per year for the 2000-01 and 2001-02 years. These funds come primarily from lottery proceeds.

- School applications for the **Early Reading Incentive Funds** must include the following:
  - ✓ the reading instruction model or program to be used
  - ✓ the method for identifying students who will be served
  - ✓ an implementation plan and timeline including professional development efforts
  - ✓ an evaluation plan
  - ✓ a budget
  - ✓ approval of the application by the school council, the principal, and the superintendent.

- School councils (or the superintendent if there is no council) must commit matching funds in order to receive a grant. (Professional development funds used to support this program may be considered part of the matching funds.)

- The Kentucky Department of Education in conjunction with the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development, provides information on **successful research-based reading models** and strategies for implementing such programs. The department must also present a report to the legislature's Interim Joint Committee on Education by September 1 of each year.

- A **Collaborative Center for Literacy Development: Early Childhood through Adulthood** has been created to promote reading skills. It is a partnership between the eight state universities, the National Center for Family Literacy, the Kentucky Department of Education, the Department of Adult Education and Literacy, and other agencies that are involved in and support literacy, language development, and reading. Some of its duties include developing a clearinghouse for literacy information, collaborating with colleges and universities in literacy training, helping districts with students who have poor reading skills, and providing professional development. The Center, which is located at the University of Kentucky, is also responsible for research and evaluation of the early reading models implemented by local schools and districts.

- In 2000, the legislature passed a comprehensive **adult literacy** bill requiring the Council on Postsecondary Education in partnership with the Department of Adult Education and Literacy, to create a mission and develop a 20-year strategy to raise the knowledge and skill level of and ensure lifelong learning opportunities for adults in Kentucky. Family literacy services are to be included in this plan.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

➔ The legislature, the Kentucky Board of Education, and the Early Reading Steering Committee approved funds to continue successful Early Reading projects through a competitive application process. The projects will serve as mentor sites for other schools and districts interested in applying for early reading grants.

➔ **The Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy,** established in October 2000, is developing a plan for high quality family literacy services by coordinating and integrating existing federal, state, and local resources. In May of this year, as part of the Adult Education Plan, additional state funds were allocated to make family literacy services available in every county. The Institute is working in collaboration with representatives of the Kentucky Department of Education (Even Start), the Department of Adult Education and Literacy, the Head Start Association, the Cabinet for Families and Children, and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood. The institute also holds an annual family literacy conference and is developing a family literacy resource center and an awareness campaign.

RESULTS

- **One hundred eighteen local reading projects have been funded** in 155 schools through the state's Early Reading Incentive Grant Fund. These funds will pay for teacher training, materials, and additional staff as needed. It is estimated that 471 elementary schools need these programs based on low achievement scores, high poverty rates, sizeable minority populations, and the number of limited-English speaking students. An additional 66 schools will begin reading projects in 2001-02.

- In addition to the state-funded early reading initiative, the Department of Education received a 27-month grant (2000-02) for $7.5 million from the federal **Reading Excellence Act**. These funds were awarded to 59 schools in 29 school districts that have high levels of poverty or schools in Title I school improvement status. These competitive grants are being used for professional development for teachers in reading instruction, selection of model reading programs to meet the needs of students, and family literacy programs for students and parents.

- The **Kentucky Literacy Partnership**, established by the Governor to develop a state plan for literacy, serve as a clearinghouse, and provide general oversight of the Reading Excellence

Act grant program, sponsored the Governor's Summit on Literacy in June 2001. It highlighted the importance of reading and generated recommendations for the state plan.

- The **Kentucky Reading Project**, regional training institutes for elementary school teachers with a special focus on reading instruction, has been created by the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development. Institutes were held at 11 sites this summer (2001).
- The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence has created a report and recommendations on reading and will continue to study this issue.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Talk** with students and parents about the importance of reading.
- ★ **Volunteer** at your local schools to read with students who need extra help.
- ★ **Ask** school board and school council members what they are doing to assure that every child learns to read for pleasure and for learning.
- ★ **Read** to your children and grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and neighbor children. Get in the habit of taking them to your local library on a regular basis.
- ★ **Give** books as gifts to children.
- ★ **Ask** for a copy of *One-to-one: Practicing Reading with Students: A Guide for Classroom Volunteers*, (a reading toolkit from the Partnership for Kentucky Schools available in January 2002) and use it to work in your community to improve reading skills. See below for contact information.
- ★ **Visit** the Partnership for Kentucky Schools Web site and find copies of ads on reading and writing. Share them with parents in your school. See below for Web site.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Collaborative Center for Early Literacy Development**, University of Kentucky, (859) 257-6734.
- **Department for Adult Education and Literacy**, Cabinet for Workforce Development; (502) 564-5114.
- **Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education**, (502) 573-1555.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Early Childhood/Early Reading Program**, (502) 564-3064.
- **Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy**, 502-584-1133 x184.
- **National Center for Family Literacy**, 502-584-1133, www.famlit.org.
- **Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org or visit the Web site at www.pfks.org.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.

EXTENDED SCHOOL SERVICES

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Extended school services (ESS) are designed to provide **additional instruction to help children** succeed in school. These services take place beyond the regular school day, week, or year. The only exception is that schools with an Early Reading Incentive Grant may use some of their ESS money as matching funds to provide individualized or small group reading instruction during the school day. (See Reading Programs, page 22).
- The extended school services program is primarily intended to be an intervention model, to help students when they need it, not wait until they have fallen behind. Students who have already fallen behind may receive remedial assistance. An accelerated approach can help these students to catch up with peers.
- Each school district is required to provide extended school services to meet student learning needs and receives state monies for this program.
- Extended school programs take many forms including after-school instruction, evening sessions, Saturday activities, or summer programs. Times may vary, depending on student needs. Support services such as transportation should be provided as necessary.
- Eligibility for these programs is determined by the district, based on students' needs for additional time to meet performance goals of the regular classroom. Districts should see that students with the greatest need are referred and served first. ESS cannot be used to discipline students.

RESULTS

- Most school districts offer summer-school and after-school programs, although some are using funds for projects that support block scheduling and year-round school calendars.
- Extended school services programs throughout the state typically serve over 100,000 students each year with 40,000 in summer programs. Many students are promoted to the next grade or are able to graduate on time due to the program. More than 80 percent of students who attend six or more days show an increase of at least one letter grade in the content areas focused on in the program.
- The most common areas of study for students in the ESS programs are reading, writing, and mathematics.
- Districts that provide transportation report improved attendance.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Approximately $36.4 million will be available each year to school districts during the 2000-2001 and 2001-02 school years.
- Extended school services programs will continue to focus more on early intervention.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- **Talk** with students and parents about the effect of extended school services in your district.
- If your school has a school-based decision making council, **ask** how extended school services fit into the consolidated plan. Suggest a committee on extended school services and volunteer to be a member. Ensure that parents have a voice in how extended school services are provided.
- If your school has a PTA/PTO/PTSA, **ask** how it can help support extended school services.
- **Volunteer** to be a teacher's aide or tutor in an extended school services program.
- **Recognize** the contributions of teachers and administrators. Let them know you appreciate their contributions toward establishing good extended school services programs.
- **Be sure** your extended school services programs are instructional programs, not merely study halls.
- If your district does not provide transportation, **encourage** your local board to do so.
- **Write** to your elected officials with examples of successes and weaknesses in extended school services. See page 81 for information on contacting state legislators.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Department of Education, Extended School Learning Branch** at (502) 564-3678 or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.

HIGH SCHOOLS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- The Kentucky Board of Education was directed by the 1990 General Assembly to review **graduation requirements** in consideration of new goals for students adopted in 1990. As a result, new graduation requirements have been established that are effective this year. See chart page 30.

- The **Commonwealth Diploma Program**, begun in 1986, provides students with a special diploma for exceptional work in high school. Requirements include completion of state and local graduation requirements and the state's pre-college preparatory curriculum; a grade "C" or better in four Advanced Placement (AP) courses in English, foreign language, an elective, and mathematics or science; and completion of AP or International Baccalaureate examinations in three of the four required AP subject areas. Students who score at or above an established cut-off point can be reimbursed for the cost of taking the AP examinations.

- The **Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship Program (KEES)** uses lottery funds for student scholarships to Kentucky colleges, universities, and vocational programs. The amount students earn is based on their grade point average (GPA) each year of high school and their highest ACT test score. Advanced placement and International Baccalaureate course grades are included in the GPA calculation with an additional weight. The higher the GPA and ACT score, the more scholarship money a student will earn with the maximum amount $2,500 a year and the minimum $125. High school counselors can provide students with more information.

- The **Kentucky Education Savings Plan Trust** allows families to save for college expenses. Contributions are tax-free, until savings are withdrawn and then are taxed at a lower rate (if used for qualified higher education expenses).

- The **Commonwealth Postsecondary Education Prepaid Tuition Trust Fund** is available for families to save for college and protect themselves against rising costs of tuition in Kentucky colleges and vocational/technical programs. The Office of the State Treasurer and the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority manage this program.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

- ➔ Kentucky's new high school graduation requirements take effect this year and the pre-college curriculum requirements change beginning next fall (2002). See chart on page 30 for listings.

- ➔ Beginning with the fall of 2004, two credits of foreign language, or a demonstrated proficiency in a foreign language, will be required as part of the pre-college curriculum requirements.

- ➔ A law passed in 2001 makes Kentucky's foster and adopted children eligible for free tuition and student fees in Kentucky colleges, universities, and technical and vocational schools. School counselors should be able to provide more information.

- ➔ Kentucky has received a federal **GEAR UP** grant for a program that encourages middle and high school students to attend post secondary education. It focuses on preparing students for college work and educating them and their families about financial resources available for college. The Department of Education, local schools, and colleges are working together to coordinate this program. The Prichard Committee is training parents in this program through the Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership.

- ➔ The legislature has created a task force to **study advanced placement** (AP) course offerings. A report with recommendations that will assure every Kentucky student access to AP classes is due this fall.

RESULTS

- In July 1992, the State Board of Education appointed a High School Restructuring Task Force comprised of educators and citizens. It recommended changes in high schools to help more students meet learning goals and reviewed high school graduation requirements. The 1993 report was not adopted as a requirement, but its recommendations were used in pilot projects and included all or some of the following:

    - ✓ individual graduation plans
    - ✓ integrated academic portfolios
    - ✓ student-initiated culminating projects
    - ✓ school-sponsored and school-approved activities
    - ✓ exit reviews

- Some schools continue to use some or all of these ideas as part of their high graduation requirements. The individual graduation plan is required for graduation beginning this year (2002).

- Recommendations to require **expanded high school transcripts** are on hold, but schools are encouraged to use them.

- The **Kentucky Virtual High School** offers high school courses online. It is managed by the Kentucky Department of Education, but credit for courses is granted by the student's local high school. Students must have approval from their high school to take these courses. The cost has been $275 per semester (½ credit) or $500 per full course for schools using block schedules, but this is subject to change. The school should pay the tuition if the course is not available at the high school (usually, the credit earned will count for high school graduation). Students may be asked to pay the fee if the course is already offered at the school or it is above and beyond the daily instructional program. KVHS teachers are Kentucky certified in the subjects they teach. For more information visit the Web site at www.kvhs.org.

- The Department of Education was awarded a three-year $1.1 million federal grant to help Kentucky High Schools **expand Advanced Placement (AP) courses** to increase access for minority students and those living in poverty and to increase the opportunity for more Kentucky students to obtain the Commonwealth Diploma. Part of the grant will be used to pay tuition for Kentucky Virtual High School courses (15 AP courses will be available this fall) and to pay the AP exam fee for eligible students. The grant will also be used to help Kentucky high schools as they offer AP courses.

- The Office of Leadership and School Improvement (502) 564-2116 and the Division of Secondary Vocational Education, both in the Department of Education, have teamed up to offer a high school initiative aimed at serving all high schools. The **Standards and Indicators for School Improvement (SISI)** will be used to help high schools reach higher levels of achievement.

WHAT TO EXPECT THIS YEAR

☞ **New high school graduation requirements** are in effect this year for the first time and college entrance requirements will be increased next fall (2002). Schools should be prepared to help students meet these requirements.

☞ High schools should be planning to help students meet the requirement to have two credits in foreign languages (beginning in 2004) for college entrance.

☞ The opportunity to earn **KEES scholarships** based on high school grades should be an incentive for students to do better in school. It should also encourage more students who thought they could never afford college to consider postsecondary education.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Ask** how your high school will help students meet the new requirements (including foreign languages) for college entrance.

★ **Encourage local business** leaders to get involved with ***Learning Equals Earning***, a project of the Partnership for Kentucky Schools that encourages employers to request academic records from entry-level job applicants. Employers can see how well students did in school. In turn, if students are asked for these records, they will be more motivated to do well in school. See below for more information.

★ **Obtain and review** ***Ready for Work: Essential Skills for Kentucky Jobs***, a 1998 report from the Partnership for Kentucky Schools. It identifies academic and job skills Kentucky employers need in their workers and also lists ways that schools, educators, and business owners can work to improve the education and skill level of Kentucky students. See below for contact information.

★ **Remind students and parents** about the opportunity to earn scholarships and the options to save for college or other postsecondary education programs.

Minimum High School Graduation and Pre-College Curriculum Requirements

Minimum High School Graduation Requirements			Pre-College Curriculum Requirements beginning Fall 2002	
Subject	**Credits**	**Courses**	**Required Credits**	**Courses**
Language Arts	4	English I, II, III, IV	4	English I, II, III, IV (or AP English)
Social Studies	3	Credits to incorporate U.S. History, Economics, Government, World Geography and World Civilization	3	Same as High School
Mathematics	3	Algebra I, Geometry, and one elective	3	Algebra I, II, and Geometry
Science	3	Credits to include life science, physical science, and earth and space science	3	Same as High School plus at least one lab course
Health	½		½	
Physical Education	½		½	
Visual and Performing Arts	1	History and appreciation of visual and performing arts or a performing arts course which incorporates such content	1	Same as High School
Foreign Language	0		2	Credits required or demonstrated competency (effective fall 2004)
Electives	7		7	5 rigorous; one or more courses that develop computer literacy strongly recommended. [In 2004, 5 credits required (3 rigorous)]
Total	22		22	15 required; 7 elective (2002) [17 required; 5 elective (2004)]
Individual graduation plan which incorporates emphasis on career development				

Note: Local school boards may substitute courses for required courses if they have the same content.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Commonwealth Postsecondary Education Prepaid Tuition Trust Fund**; Office of the State Treasurer, (502) 564-4722 or visit their Web site at www.kytreasury.com or the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority, (800) 928-8926.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Leadership and School Improvement** (502) 564-2116 or the **Division of Curriculum and Assessment Development**, (502) 564-2106 or (800) 533-5372 or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Secondary Vocational Education** at (502) 564-3472 or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Special Projects Branch (advanced placement grant)**, (502) 564-2106.
- **Kentucky Education Savings Plan Trust,** Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority; (877) 598-7878 (KY TRUST) or visit the Web site at www.kentuckytrust.org.
- **Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship Program,** Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority, (800) 928-8926 ext. 7397 or visit the Web site at www.kheaa.com.
- **Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority**, (800) 928-8926 ext. 7397 or visit the Web site at www.kheaa.com.
- **Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org or visit the Web site at www.pfks.org.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.

NOTES:

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION:
PREPARING STUDENTS FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- By law, Kentucky measures school success on several factors including the proportion of students who make a **successful transition** from school to work, postsecondary education, or the military.

- The **purpose** of career and technical education is to develop problem-solving skills, teach basic and advanced academic skills in a technological setting, and provide experience in all aspects of an industry students are preparing to enter.

- Students may participate in **authentic work-based learning experiences** while enrolled in high school such as internships, cooperative education, pre-apprenticeship, mentoring, shadowing, and community service.

- An **Individual Graduation Plan** will be developed by all students when entering high school indicating a career objective and a planned course of study necessary for a successful transition to postsecondary education or a career.

- The **Office of School-to-Work** in the Workforce Development Cabinet convenes representatives of business, labor, education, and government to develop and implement a system to help students make the transition from school to work, based on funding available from the federal School-to-Work Act and School-to-Careers legislation.

- The **School to Careers** system was established in 1998 by the Kentucky General Assembly. It serves as an umbrella for career-related programs in the public schools, including Tech Prep, School-to-Work, and High Schools That Work.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

➔ The 2001 legislature has required that the Kentucky Department of Education and the Department for Technical Education:

- ✓ implement a comprehensive plan for career and technical education to review and revise equipment and facilities standards and establish a needs assessment process by January 1, 2004;
- ✓ prepare an annual statewide report on the academic achievement of career and technical education students, including results from Kentucky's achievement tests broken out by career cluster;

- ✓ develop a plan to assist schools that do not meet school performance goals or whose career/technical education student average score is lower than the school's average score.

➔ Funding for local school districts operating technical or vocational preparation programs was increased to help meet increasing equipment, materials, and facilities needs.

➔ School districts will receive full SEEK funding for students who spend part of their day in a state-operated career, technical, or vocational program in another school. In the past, an amount was deducted from SEEK funding for these students.

RESULTS

- Listed below are the statewide averages of **transition results** for 1999 graduates. These figures do not take into account the number of students who drop out of school.

  - ✓ Attended college N 52.7 percent
  - ✓ Attended vocational/technical school N 4.3 percent
  - ✓ Employed N 29.3 percent
  - ✓ Entered military N 2.7 percent
  - ✓ Combined school and work N 6.3 percent
  - ✓ Not Successful N 4.8 percent

- The following initiatives are being implemented across the state. They focus on keeping students in school, improving their preparation for the workforce, and increasing successful transition rates.

  - ✓ **School-To-Work** is a systematic effort that begins at the primary level and goes through the high school and postsecondary levels. It is coordinated through local partnerships of schools, business, labor, and government, which work to design programs that fit their own communities. The key to School-To-Work success is the working partnership between employers and schools.

    School-To-Work is designed to help students see the relationship between education and the world of work. It helps students and parents understand the importance of their educational choices and their effect on career choices and opportunities. It also helps students develop skills needed to be successful in the workplace.

    The focus at the primary level is on awareness of various careers. The middle school level focus is on career exploration, and at the high school and postsecondary levels, the focus is on career preparation. Employers are involved in several areas: being classroom speakers, opening their businesses to field trips, serving as advisors for a school-based enterprise, providing input into the curriculum, offering unpaid or paid work-based learning opportunities for students, and planning activities in cooperation with schools.

School-To-Work must include:

- ✓ a combination of school-based and work-based learning
- ✓ an opportunity for students to complete a career major
- ✓ an integration of academic and occupational or technical education
- ✓ a link between high schools and postsecondary education (vocational/technical schools, community colleges)

There are some limited grants available for School-to-Work. Contact the Workforce Development Cabinet for further information.

✓ **Tech Prep** is a program of study that combines at least two years of high school with a minimum of two years of postsecondary education in a planned sequence of classes. It integrates academic, vocational, and technical instruction; utilizes work-based and worksite learning related to students' career goals where appropriate and available; provides technical preparation in a career field such as engineering technology, applied science, mechanical, industrial, or practical art or trade, agriculture, health occupations, and business; builds student competence in mathematics, science, reading, writing, communications, economics, and workplace skills; leads to an associate or a baccalaureate degree or a postsecondary certificate in a specific career field; and leads to placement in appropriate employment or to further education.

✓ **Jobs for Kentucky Graduates Program** has been implemented in high schools to address learning goals for students, drop-out prevention, and school-to-work transition designed to meet the needs of at-risk students. Each program has enrolled 30 to 40 students, juniors and seniors at risk of dropping out or not becoming successfully employed. A teacher (specialist) concentrates on providing students with extra help in job readiness skills and academic support. Students also receive intensive case management and support services. Upon graduation from high school, these students will receive job search assistance.

✓ **High Schools That Work** is designed to combine challenging academic courses and modern vocational studies to raise the academic achievement of career-bound students. The focus is on school-wide revitalization that improves the academic and technical standards of the high school curriculum. Low level academic and technical courses are eliminated; higher performance standards are set for students. Support services are included through such activities as advisor-advisee (a plan where students are assigned to the same advisor throughout their high school years) and extended school services to help students achieve the new standards. Kentucky currently has 100 High Schools That Work sites. The following practices are key to its success:

- ✓ higher student expectations
- ✓ increased access to challenging vocational/technical studies
- ✓ rigorous and relevant academic studies
- ✓ students completing a focused program of studies based on a career major
- ✓ opportunities for students to participate in work-based learning

- ✓ teachers working together to plan and deliver integrated instruction
- ✓ students actively engaged in the learning process
- ✓ guidance and advising systems available for all students
- ✓ extra help for students to complete an accelerated learning program
- ✓ use of student assessments/evaluations for continuous improvement

✓ A **School to Careers** system was created to provide matching funds to districts or groups of districts to aid in development and implementation of work preparation and education opportunities for all students beginning in kindergarten. The program is seen as a method of maintaining the momentum created by the federal School-to-Work implementation grant by providing state and local resources. Goals of the program include reducing drop-out and remediation rates; increasing postsecondary entrance and completion rates; improving life skills, curriculum development, and instructional methods; providing students opportunities to receive occupational skill standards certification as well as a Career Major Certificate; increasing the number of faculty participating in business/industry externships; increasing the number of business, industry, and labor partnerships; and meeting the needs of special populations. Kentucky currently has seven School to Careers sites (districts or groups of districts). Efforts toward expanding additional School to Careers sites are in progress pending additional allocation of state funds.

✓ **Career and Technical Student Organizations** are providing opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, teamwork, communications, and community service. The following organizations are available to high school students enrolled in vocational education: FFA (agriculture), FBLA (business), FHA (family and consumer sciences), DECA (marketing), TSA (technology), VICA (industrial education), and HOSA (health sciences).

✓ **Secondary Career and Technical Education Programs** are available in 171 school districts offering programs in grades 7 through 12. Programs and curricula have been restructured based on new and emerging occupations to prepare students for all aspects of an industry. All vocational areas are providing instructional programs designed around career clusters and majors such as health or business careers, agriculture, construction, transportation, manufacturing, and human services.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Get involved** in promoting career awareness and planning by assisting with career days/fairs or by being a guest speaker.

★ **Obtain and review** ***Ready for Work: Essential Skills for Kentucky Jobs***, a 1998 report from the Partnership for Kentucky Schools. It identifies academic and job skills Kentucky employers need in their workers and also lists ways that schools, educators, and business owners can work to improve the education and skill level of Kentucky students. See below for contact information.

- ★ **Serve** on advisory committees or task forces to identify skills necessary for the workplace to be included in the curriculum.
- ★ **Encourage** school-based decision making councils to support career and technical programs in high schools with funds necessary for hands-on activities.
- ★ **Talk** to teachers and students in vocational/technical programs for their views of the programs.
- ★ **Serve** as a judge for student organizations' career and technical competitive events.
- ★ **Write** to your elected state and federal officials with specific examples of successes and problems you have noted. See page 81 for information on contacting state legislators.
- ★ **Attend** local school board meetings to ask about their responsibility for career and technical education programs.
- ★ **Recognize** student achievement in career and technical education programs and the contributions of teachers and administrators.
- ★ **Participate** in your local school-to-work partnership council or provide school-to-work learning opportunities for students participating in the program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Cabinet for Workforce Development**, (502) 564-6606.
- **Kentucky Department of Education Division of Career and Technical Education** at (502) 564-3472 or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.
- **Office of School-To-Work**, (502) 564-5901.
- **Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org or visit the Web site at www.pfks.org.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.

NOTES:

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- **Exceptional students** are defined as those who differ from same-aged children in physical, mental, learning, emotional, or social characteristics and abilities to such a degree that they need special educational programs or services. This includes students with physical or mental impairments, communication disorders, learning disabilities, emotional behavioral disabilities, and exceptional ability to perform at high levels (gifted and talented).

Student with Disabilities

- Under **federal law**, all students with disabilities from ages 3 to 21 years must have available to them a "free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living."

- In Kentucky, students ages 3 to 21 with disabilities are served by public schools. Students eligible for these services must be offered an appropriate program in the "**least restrictive environment**." Public schools must ensure that children with disabilities are not removed from the regular education environment, unless the nature and severity of their disability is such that education in the regular classroom with special aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Exceptional children programs as well as home and hospital instruction must be available for those who need it.

- The funding formula for Kentucky schools provides additional funding for those students defined as exceptional.

- Schools are accountable in Kentucky for helping all students succeed academically; so all students take the state tests that determine school progress. Students with disabilities, who have special accommodations for everyday learning, may use those same accommodations when taking state assessments. Students with severe disabilities who are not able to take the test have a modified portfolio, outlining and measuring progress on their individual learning goals.

- A state law adopted in 1998 provided the following:
  - ✓ Each exceptional student must have an individual education program (IEP). School personnel and parents determine the student's educational needs, services needed, and expected results. School staff must report to parents (at least as often as parents are informed of nondisabled students' progress) on their child's progress toward the annual goals. Administrative regulations have been developed by the Kentucky Board of Education to see that these education plans are monitored for compliance with federal

laws and regulations. The State Board is authorized to provide assistance to and withhold funds from districts that are not complying with these laws. These funds can be returned once the district is in compliance.

- ✓ **The Kentucky Special Education Mentor Program** was established to select and train expert special education teachers and administrators and assign them to assist districts that are not complying with state and federal laws.
- ✓ Exceptional students who choose to drop out of school and their parents must be interviewed. This information will be used to develop programs to reduce the drop-out rate of these students.

Gifted and Talented Students

- ■ Students with demonstrated or potential ability to perform at high levels are described as **gifted and talented** and include those with general intellectual aptitude, specific academic aptitude, creative or divergent thinking, psychological or leadership skills, and talents in the visual and performing arts. In Kentucky law they are also defined as **"exceptional"** students.
- ■ The state provides additional funds for school districts, requiring them to provide special programs for students identified as **gifted and talented**.
- ■ The purpose of the **State Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education**, attached to the Department of Education, is to make recommendations to the Kentucky Board of Education, the Department of Education, and the Education Professional Standards Board regarding services for gifted and talented students. It is comprised of 19 members appointed by the governor and three nonvoting, ex-officio members.
- ■ **Gifted-student-services plans** are required for gifted students for the first time this year (2001-02). Information from parents is to be used in developing plans to meet student learning needs and parents are to be informed about these plans and how they can request changes in services. The Kentucky Department of Education will provide assistance to districts for these plans, which differ from those required by federal law for children with disabilities.

Students At-Risk

- ■ **Students at-risk for educational failure** are defined in the law as those whose family income qualifies them for the federal school lunch program. To help these students succeed, Kentucky law makes the following provisions:
  - ✓ a commitment to provide all students with the opportunity to learn by including all children in the accountability program
  - ✓ preschool programs for 4-year-old children who would qualify for the school lunch program
  - ✓ extended school services to allow additional instruction for students who need it

- ✓ family resource and youth services centers to address problems that interfere with student learning (Advisory councils for these centers must include adequate representation of parents of all students in their schools.)
- ✓ waiver or reduction of school fees for pupils who qualify for the free- and reduced-price lunch program.

- ■ Title I funds from the federal government are available for some schools with high percentages of students on the free- and reduced-price lunch program to provide assistance to students who have academic deficiencies.

- ■ The Department of Education was awarded a three-year $1.1 million federal grant to help Kentucky High Schools **expand Advanced Placement (AP) courses** to increase access of minority students and those living in poverty, and to increase the opportunity for students to obtain the Commonwealth Diploma. Part of the grant will be used to pay tuition for courses available through the Kentucky Virtual High School, which will offer 15 AP courses this fall and to pay the AP exam fee for eligible students.

- ■ Kentucky has received a federal GEAR UP grant to encourage and support students at risk to attend postsecondary education. See page 28 for more information.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Encourage schools to have high expectations for all students**. Don't assume students cannot learn because they have a disability or special learning need.

- ★ **Review** student test data broken out by poverty, Title 1, gifted and talented, and disabilities to see how well students with special needs are performing. This information is available in your school's expanded report card. Ask the superintendent, principals, and school board what they are doing to assure these students have every opportunity to succeed.

- ★ **Talk** with and encourage students who have disabilities or special learning needs.

- ★ **Encourage all students** to consider taking challenging courses including algebra and advanced placement courses.

- ★ If you know parents who are struggling to help their special needs children in school, suggest they **call one of the parent support groups** listed below.

- ★ **Call** the Department of Education if you believe children in your district who have special needs are not being served well (502) 564-4970.

- ★ **Recognize** the diverse needs of learners including academic, social, socioeconomic, gender, and cultural needs.

- ★ **Encourage** all parents to get involved in the PTA/PTO/PTSA. If your school does not have a PTA, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office at (502) 564-4378.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Class Act Educational Resource Center**, 2359 Jackson School Road, Benton, KY 42025; (270) 527-1951.
- **Kentucky Assistive Technology Service (KATS) Network**, 8412 Westport Road, Louisville, KY 40242; (800) 327-5287; e-mail: katsnet@iglu.com or visit the Web site at www.katsnet.org (information and referral to individuals with disabilities).
- **Kentucky Association for Gifted Education (KAGE)**; P.O. Box 9610, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42012-9610; (270) 745-4301 or visit the Web site at http://wku.edu/Dept/Academic/Education/KAGE/ or e-mail kage@wku.edu.
- **Kentucky Autism Training Center**, (502) 852-4631 or (800) 334-8635 x4631; or visit the Web site at www.louisville.edu/medschool/katc. A manual, *Technical Assistance for Autism* is available from the Kentucky Department of Education; (502) 564-2672.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Exceptional Children Services**, Capital Plaza Tower, 8th floor, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601; (502) 564-4970 or for gifted education (502) 564-2672 or (800) 533-5372 or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Learning Strategies Branch (gifted and talented education)**, Capital Plaza Tower, 17th floor, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601; (502) 564-2672 or (800) 533-5372.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Special Projects Branch (advanced placement grant)** (502) 564-2106.
- **Kentucky Disabilities Coalition,** P.O. Box 1589, Frankfort, KY 40602; (502) 875-1871 or (800) 977-7505; fax (502) 875-1982 (coalition of over 70 organizations that refer callers to support groups).
- **Kentucky Partnership for Families and Children**, 1410 Versailles Road, # 6, Frankfort, KY 40601; (502) 695-5366 or (800) 369-0533; fax (502) 695-6829.
- **Kentucky Special Parent Involvement Network (KY SPIN)**, 10301-B Deering Road, Louisville, KY 40292; (800) 525-7746 or Louisville area (502) 937-6874; e-mail: spinpti@aol.com; fax (502) 937-6464 (training, information and support to parents and families of children with all types of disabilities).
- **Learning Disabilities Association of Kentucky, Inc., (LDA of Kentucky)** 2210 Goldsmith Lane, Suite 118, Louisville, Kentucky 40218; (502) 473-1256; e-mail: ldaofky@aol.com.
- **Office of Family Leadership, Department of Mental Health**, 100 Fair Oak Lane, 4th Floor, 4 W-C, Frankfort, KY 40621; (502) 564-7610; e-mail: dmhmrs@state.ky.us (support and information for families of children with emotional and behavioral problems).
- **Parent Information Network of Kentucky (PINK),** P.O. Box 99367, Louisville, KY 40269; (502) 479-PINK; (877) 611-PINK; e-mail: pink@kyp2p.org; fax: (502) 267-2455 or visit the Web site at www.kyp2p.org (information and networking with other families of children with disabilities).
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.
- **Protection and Advocacy Division,** 100 Fair Oaks Lane, 3rd floor, Frankfort, KY 40601; (800) 372-2988 or visit the Web site at http://kypa@mail.pa.state.ky.us (protection of rights for persons with disabilities and mental illnesses).
- **Spina Bifida Association of Kentucky**, 982 Eastern Parkway, Box 18, Louisville, KY 40217; (502) 637-7363; e-mail: KYSBA@aol.com or visit the Web site at www.sbak.org (information and referral service for families and individuals affected by spina bifida).

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION: LEARNING, REPRESENTATION, AND EMPLOYMENT

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Schools are held accountable in Kentucky for educating **all students**.
- **Data on student performance** must be reported by race, gender, and eligibility for the free- and reduced-price lunch program. School councils and districts must use this data in consolidated planning as they work on school improvement.
- **Teacher in-service programs** must include effective awareness and sensitivity training to help teachers motivate and nurture students of diverse cultures.
- **School-based decision making councils** in schools with 8 percent or more minority students must have minority representation.
- **Family Resource and Youth Services Center Advisory Councils** must have adequate representation of parents of the students represented in their schools.
- **Superintendent screening committees** in districts with 8 percent or more minority students must have minority representation.
- Appointments to **state boards and commissions** must include reasonable minority representation.
- Criteria for **textbook selection** must include the contributions to society of people of all ethnic backgrounds.
- The law requires superintendents to seek **minority applicants** when vacancies exist.
- The Education Professional Standards Board is responsible for **monitoring diversity at teacher preparation programs** and providing assistance to increase the diversity of Kentucky teachers.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

→ The Commissioner's Educational Equity Council was formed, combining members of the Education Equity Task Force and the Minority Student Achievement Task Force. It meets quarterly with the Commissioner of Education to monitor progress and offer advice on closing the gaps.

➔ Kentucky participated in a federally funded **Multicultural Early Childhood Team Training project** to help teachers working with immigrant children and their families, especially families and children with disabilities and English as a second language. Twenty trainers are now available across Kentucky. For more information on how to set up training in your school or district contact the Kentucky Department of Education's Equity Division, (502) 564-2703 or Office of Supportive Learning Environments, (502) 564-7056.

RESULTS

- Statewide assessment scores show that a smaller percent of African American and Hispanic students meet state learning goals than white students, and a smaller percent of students on free or reduced lunch meet goals than students not on free lunch.
- The Kentucky Department of Education created a Minority Student Achievement Task Force to determine how to eliminate the gap in student achievement between minority and other students. A report entitled "All Means All" (available from the Department of Education) was produced and six school districts (Bardstown Independent, Christian County, Fayette County, Jefferson County, Owensboro Independent, and Paducah Independent) have been selected to work intently on closing the gaps.
- School Consolidated Plans must include a plan to address equity issues.
- The Kentucky Department of Education has a Division of Equity with a staff of seven. Part of its responsibility is to assist schools in creating and maintaining equitable opportunities for learning, providing multi-cultural education, and cultural diversity.
- **Equitable Schools Grants** are available from the Equity Division in the Department of Education for schools and districts to address equity. Information on the program is available on the Equity Division Web site at http://ww.kde.state.ky.us/equity.
- The former Education Equity Task Force developed **A Plan for Education Equity** and an **Equity Analysis and Data Gathering Instrument** to assist local schools and districts in evaluating the effectiveness of their work in creating equitable school environments. For more information or copies, call the Division of Equity in the Department of Education at (502) 564-8137.
- A **Minority Teacher Recruitment** program was created in 1993. That was followed by the establishment of a Division of Minority Educator Recruitment and Retention Division in the Department of Education in 1995. The purpose is to attract and recruit minority students to teaching. As a result:

  ✓ 120 minority teachers have graduated through the Alternative Routes to Certification program and have been certified and hired.
  ✓ Scholarship funds for minority teachers and administrators have totaled $3.9 million from 1993 through 2000; to date 1,587 minority students have benefited from the scholarship program.

  - ✓ The Department of Education has implemented several early identification programs for minority students at the middle and high school levels to encourage minority youth to attend college and consider teaching as a career. One of these programs, the A-TEAM, has been implemented in 10 school districts in Kentucky, and summer institutes are now in place at seven of the eight state-supported universities.
  - ✓ The Kentucky Department of Education, in collaboration with the Kentucky Alliance of Black School Educators, has held parent involvement workshops in Paducah, Hopkinsville, and at the University of Kentucky in Lexington.

- The Division of Minority Teacher Recruitment and the University of Louisville are developing a training and recruitment program for **school counselors**, to encourage minority educators to consider counseling.

- Summer institutes in math, science, technology, and communications have been held for middle and high school students in Jefferson and Fayette counties to interest minority students in these subjects and encourage them to consider teaching as a career.

- An **Administrative Leadership Institute** has been established by the Department of Education, the Kentucky Alliance of Black School Educators, and Western Kentucky University. The institute develops and certifies minority principals for Kentucky schools. Sixty-seven educators seeking principal certification have completed or are enrolled in this program and one has been hired. Six educators seeking superintendent certification have completed the program and are seeking employment. Contact the Division of Minority Educator Recruitment and retention at (502) 564-1479 for more information.

- The Kentucky Alliance of Black Educators and the Department of Education have developed a **New Teacher Orientation/Induction and Refinement Conference** to orient new teachers, help them meet Kentucky's teacher goals, and form a network of teachers who can support one another. Contact the Division of Minority Educator Recruitment and Retention at (502) 564-1479 for more information.

- **Kentucky Women in Science, Math, Engineering, and Technology (KY-WSMET)**, a new group interested in improving achievement and career opportunities for women and girls, includes representatives from higher education, the Kentucky Department of Education, the Council on Postsecondary Education, the Kentucky Commission on Women, and local school teachers and district personnel. Its goal is to increase student achievement in and the number of students examining science, math, engineering, and technology as career options, and retaining more students in these subjects in higher education. For more information contact WOMENINSCIENCE@LSV.UKY.EDU.

- To address the problem of a lack of minorities in leadership positions, the Department of Education has contacted local superintendent screening committees, assisted in identifying minority candidates, created a Web site dedicated to creating a pool of applicants for superintendents, and in 1998 created an ad hoc committee of Kentucky citizens to address the issue of a lack of minority persons in leadership positions. Despite all of these efforts, there are no minority superintendents among Kentucky's 176 school districts.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Review** your school or district Expanded Report Card, available at the school or district office and check assessment scores for differing groups of students. If there are gaps, ask what is being done to close those gaps in achievement.
- ★ **Ask** how your school and district address equity and diversity in consolidated planning. Suggest that your school use the Equity Analysis and Data Gathering Instrument, available from the Division of Equity to assess what is happening and determine what more can be done to serve all students well.
- ★ **Attend** the Third Annual Gender Education/Title IX Conference this fall. For registration and more information, visit the Department of Education's Equity Division Web site at http://www.kde.state.ky.us/equity.
- ★ **Talk** with and encourage students from all backgrounds. Ask whether they think all students are being well served. Remind them about the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarships available for all Kentucky students (See page 27.)
- ★ **Recognize** the diverse needs of learners including academic, social, socioeconomic, gender, and cultural differences.
- ★ **Plan** a workshop for minority parents in your community. Contact the Division of Minority Educator Recruitment and Retention at (502) 564-1479 for more information.
- ★ **Look for and encourage** the use of instructional materials that are accurate and free of stereotypes.
- ★ **Include** persons from all backgrounds on school or council committees.
- ★ **Suggest** persons from various cultural groups who might share with your child's class.
- ★ If you observe that your child's school is not sensitive to the needs of diverse students, **suggest** an awareness workshop. Call the Kentucky Department of Education for more information at (502) 564-2703 and visit its Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.
- ★ **Sponsor** a school social event that involves families from different cultures to share foods, customs, and so on.
- ★ **Encourage** minority students to consider teaching as a career.
- ★ If your school has a school-based decision making council, **encourage** minority candidates to run for council positions and participate on council committees. Ask the council how it will incorporate minority issues and contributions in its school plan.

- ★ **Encourage** parents of minority students to get involved in the PTA/PTO/PTSA. If your school does not have a PTA, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office at (502) 564-4378.

- ★ **Ask** your superintendent how your district recruits minority applicants and works to retain minority employees.

- ★ **Visit** your schools. Look for cultural diversity within textbooks, library books, magazines, and other materials. Encourage schools to provide such materials.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Commission on Human Rights** at (800) 292-5566.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Equity** at (502) 564-2703; the **Division of Minority Educator Recruitment and Retention,** (502) 564-1479 or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.

NOTES:

SCHOOL-BASED DECISION MAKING

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- **School-based decision making (SBDM)** is a shared process, in which most of the policies and plans for instruction are made at the local school. It gives teachers, principals, and parents the power to determine the direction of their schools. It was enacted to **improve student learning** by letting the people closest to the children make educational decisions.

- School councils usually include six people: the principal (usually the chairperson), three teachers (elected by teachers), and two parents (elected by parents).

- In schools with a minority student population of 8 percent or greater, schools must have **minority representation** on the council. If after the regular election there is not a minority member on the council, all parents may vote to elect a minority parent. In addition, all teachers vote to elect a minority teacher. If there are no minority teachers in the school, another teacher is elected by the faculty. If minority teachers at the school do not want to serve, no additional teacher is elected.

- Each school council makes **policy decisions** about:

  - ✓ curriculum
  - ✓ instruction and instructional materials including textbooks
  - ✓ assignment of students and use of space
  - ✓ daily schedule
  - ✓ discipline and classroom management
  - ✓ staff positions at the school
  - ✓ assignment of staff time
  - ✓ extracurricular programs and student participation policies
  - ✓ procedures, consistent with local board policy, for determining alignment with state standards, use of technology, and program evaluation
  - ✓ school budget including professional development funds and use of school reward money
  - ✓ how the principal will consult with the council when there are vacancies
  - ✓ instructional practices

- In addition, when there is a **vacancy**, the council selects the principal. For other vacancies, the principal makes the final hiring decision after consulting with the council. The required **consultation policy** must include, at the very least, meetings, timelines, interviews, reviews of written applications, reviews of references, and how to address situations when the council is not available for consultation.

- **Councils must develop school improvement plans using school assessment data** to ensure that each student makes academic progress. This data, provided by the Department of

Education no later than December 31 of each year, must be broken out by race, gender, disability, and participation in the federal free- and reduced-price lunch program.

- **Use of three of the four professional development days** required by law is to be determined by the school council and is to be consistent with the school's consolidated plan, the professional development plan, and teachers' individual growth plans.
- The council must consult with the librarian on **maintenance of the library media center** including purchase of instructional materials, information technology, and equipment. Schools are required to have a library media center, staffed by a certified media librarian. Librarians may serve more than one school, if the school council approves.
- School councils that use **committees** to do their work must establish policies to facilitate the involvement of parents, classified staff members such as secretaries, cafeteria workers, and custodians, and other interested persons on these committees.
- School councils set **policies**, but principals continue day-to-day operation and management of the schools, and principals and faculties implement the policies.
- All schools must have councils, with three exceptions:
  - ✓ schools that are the only ones in the district may be exempt;
  - ✓ schools that have met school accountability goals may be exempt if teachers and parents vote not to have a council; at least 25 parents of students enrolled in the school must participate in this vote
  - ✓ certain district-operated entities such as vocational, alternative, special education schools, and preschools are exempt
- School council members are required to receive **training** each year. New members must attend at least six hours of training, which must include information on the authority, duties, and responsibilities of council members, the state accountability process, and the tools available to councils. Those who have served one year or more must attend at least three hours. Training for new members must be conducted by persons endorsed by the Department of Education and must be completed no later than 30 days after members have taken office. Members who fill a vacancy have 30 days after taking office to complete this training. Experienced council members have 120 days to complete their training. The cost of training or professional development for parent members of school councils or committees may be paid for with school's professional development funds.
- Councils that will be hiring a principal must complete **training on recruitment and interviewing for principal selection.**
- **New and more rigorous standards** were established for trainers in 2000. Trainers must be approved by the Department of Education.

- The **definition of parent** for school council purposes includes parent, stepparent, or foster parent of a student, or a person who has legal custody of a student pursuant to a court order and with whom the student resides.

- **Parents may vote** for school council members only if their child will be a student attending that school during the term in which the council serves. For example, parents of seniors may not vote in the high school election unless they have another child who will attend high school the next year, and parents of middle school graduates may vote in the high school council election where their student will attend.

- **Parents may not serve as members of the school council** if they or their relatives work in the school in which the parent will serve or in the district central office. They may serve if they work or have relatives working in another school in the district. In the past, parents were not able to serve if they worked in the school district or had relatives working in the district.

- Local school boards may require **annual reports** from councils to describe a school's progress in reaching the educational goals set by law and the district.

- The 1998 **school safety bill** requires that school council policies on discipline and behavior be consistent with school district policy. It also required schools to study safety and discipline issues during the 1998-99 school year and prepare district-wide and school safety plans.

- By November 1 of each year, the **principal must submit the names and addresses of school council members, along with verification that they have completed the required training,** to the superintendent, who will send this information on to the Department of Education.

- **Councils may adopt terms for longer than the one-year** specified in the law, but that rule will apply only to councils elected after the change is made. Members may succeed themselves.

- **Teachers elected to school councils cannot be involuntarily transferred** during their term of office. **Teachers may serve** as members of the school council regardless of their place of residence. In the past teachers could not serve if they lived outside the state of Kentucky.

RESULTS

- As of July 1, 2001, there were nearly 1,200 school councils with 1,200 principals, 3,600 teachers, and nearly 2,400 parents making important school decisions.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- School councils are getting more involved in planning for school improvement, which should result in more focus on curriculum and instruction. Schools receive their assessment data broken out by gender, race, and eligibility for the free- and reduced-price lunch program.

Watch for ongoing work on the school **consolidated plan using school test data to determine areas of need**.

- Councils should be paying more attention to professional development that helps teachers work with students to improve academic achievement.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Get involved**. If your school has an SBDM council, run for a school council seat or volunteer to serve on a council committee. Attend council meetings and share your opinions with your parent and teacher representatives.
- ★ **Work** to elect parent and teacher representatives to your school council who care about all the children in the school. People who have one gripe or one issue in mind usually do not make the best council members.
- ★ If there is a PTA/PTO/PTSA in your school, **ask** for programs about SBDM. If there is no PTA in your school, form one. A PTA can inform parents and work to elect good council members. Call the Kentucky PTA office at (502) 564-4378.
- ★ If you have a school council, **consider** joining the Kentucky Association of School Councils. You can attend its fall conference and use its training opportunities whether your school is a member or not. See below for more information.
- ★ **Recognize** the contributions of school council members as they work to improve your school. Let them know you appreciate their time and commitment to your school. Recognize administrators and board members who support school councils.
- ★ **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask school board members how they are supporting school councils and helping them make the best decisions for students.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Association of School Councils** is an organization of school councils that offers information, workshops, and literature; call (859) 238-2188 or visit the Web site at www.kasc.net.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Instructional Leadership Development** (502) 564-4201, or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us for numerous technical assistance documents available for free download.
- **Kentucky PTA** has a handbook on school-based decision making. Call (502) 564-4378 for a copy.
- **Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org or visit the Web site at www.pfks.org.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.

FAMILY RESOURCE/YOUTH SERVICES CENTERS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Kentucky law provides **family resource and youth services centers** to help students and their families who face social, economic, or health barriers that may interfere with learning. Schools are eligible to apply for center grants, if at least one-fifth of the students qualify for free- and reduced-price lunch. Grants are provided through the state Cabinet for Families and Children. Family resource centers serve elementary schools; youth services centers serve middle and high schools.

- The coordinators at the centers identify problems and link students and families to local resources that help students be more ready to learn.

- By law, family resource centers are required to address at least these services:

  - ✓ full-time preschool child care for children 2 and 3 years of age
  - ✓ after-school child care for children 4 through 12
  - ✓ families-in-training to support expectant families and those with infants and young children
  - ✓ parent and child education
  - ✓ support and training for child care providers
  - ✓ health services or referrals

- Youth services centers must address:

  - ✓ referrals to health and social services
  - ✓ employment counseling, training, and placement
  - ✓ summer and part-time job development
  - ✓ drug and alcohol abuse counseling
  - ✓ family crisis and mental health counseling

- Resource centers are guided by **local advisory councils,** which must include parents, service providers, and educators. One-third of the members must be parents and no more than one-third can be educators. Students serve on councils for youth services centers.

- The Cabinet for Families and Children oversees the Office of Family Resource and Youth Services Centers with nine regional coordinators who provide technical assistance and training to center staff and school districts. These regional coordinators are housed in sites across the state.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

➔ Additional funds were allocated for 55 new centers in the 2001-02 school year.

➔ The legislature increased funding for resource centers from $43.5 million in 1999-2000 to $47.5 million in 2000-01 and $51.8 million in 2001-02.

RESULTS

- As of July 1, 2001, there were **765 centers** serving **1,145 schools** and more than **550,000 students**.
- Kentucky has 388 family resource centers, 230 youth services centers, and 147 combined family resources and youth services centers.
- **Research** shows that schools with family resource and youth services centers have:
  - ✓ increased parental involvement
  - ✓ increased school readiness
  - ✓ decreased barriers to learning
  - ✓ increased teacher satisfaction
- Approximately 27 additional schools are eligible for centers, but have not been funded. This does not include alternative schools or preschools that stand alone (separate from other schools), which are not eligible for centers unless paired with an eligible school.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Volunteer** to participate on a Family Resource or Youth Services Center Advisory Council.

★ If your school qualifies for a center but has not received a grant, **volunteer** to participate on the grant writing committee.

★ **Suggest that a Parents and Teachers Talking Together (PT3)** meeting be conducted through your center. This is a way resource centers can involve parents and determine more about school needs. Contact the Prichard Committee for more information at (800) 928-2111.

★ If your school has a school-based decision making council, **ask** council members what their plans are for coordinating with or establishing a center. Suggest that the school council, resource center advisory council, and PTA board meet together once or twice a year to coordinate plans and activities.

★ **Volunteer** at your center. See what needs you, your church, or other organizations can meet.

★ **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask members about their experiences with centers and what they do to support the centers.

★ **Write** to your elected officials with examples of successes or problems with Family Resource and Youth Services Centers. See page 81 for information on contacting state legislators.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Cabinet for Families and Children,** Office of Family Resource and Youth Services Centers, (502) 564-4986, or visit the Web site at www.cfc.state.ky.us/frysc/.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.

NOTES:

SCHOOL SAFETY

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- The 1998 General Assembly passed a **school safety bill** to provide every student access to a safe, secure, and orderly school that is conducive to learning. It has many provisions including the following:

  - ✓ Schools and districts must have **plans, policies, and procedures** for assisting students who are at risk of school failure and who engage in disruptive or disorderly behavior.

  - ✓ The **Center for School Safety** is located at Eastern Kentucky University. Its mission includes serving as a central point for data collection, analysis, and research, distributing information about research and safety programs, and providing technical assistance and training for schools and communities. This center is governed by a board of directors appointed by the governor, representing most agencies that deal with children. This board reports to the Secretary of the Education, Arts, and Humanities Cabinet in the governor's office.

  - ✓ The Kentucky Department of Education is responsible for **establishing and maintaining a statewide data collection system** for information related to school violence, possession of weapons or drugs, student arrests, and the number of suspensions, expulsions, and corporal punishment. It is responsible for setting discipline code guidelines and for awarding grants to districts to establish alternative education programs. The department also works collaboratively with the Center for School Safety to develop, promote, and disseminate information about school safety.

  - ✓ Since 1998-99, **schools and school districts have assessed their school safety and student discipline** guidelines and established plans. Some schools have received grants to implement their plans.

  - ✓ School boards must adopt **district codes of acceptable student behavior and discipline codes**, reference them in all school handbooks for parents and students, and post them in all schools. Those policies must include the expulsion of students who have or sell drugs or controlled substances at school; who have physically assaulted, battered, or abused staff or students at school or school functions; or who bring weapons to school. All school employees and parents shall be provided a copy of the codes.

  - ✓ School boards must establish a process for a two-way communication system for teachers and staff to notify administrators of an emergency.

  - ✓ Students who have been expelled must be offered educational services in an alternative school program, unless there is clear and convincing evidence that they pose a threat to the safety of students or school staff or that the student cannot be placed in a state-funded agency program.

- ✓ Exceptional children cannot be suspended or expelled if the behavior is related to their disability, unless there is a threat to the safety of other students, staff, or themselves. In that case, they must be placed in an alternative program or receive alternative services.
- ✓ Primary school students shall not be suspended unless their presence poses a safety threat to other children, staff, or themselves.
- ✓ Principals are required to report to law enforcement officials any assault causing serious injury or involving a weapon, sexual offense, kidnapping, drug or illegal controlled substance offense, or school property damage.
- ✓ Certain school staff have access to more information from the courts about violent offenders who are enrolled in their school. Courts must notify principals within five days when students are convicted of such offenses.

- ■ In an effort to assure student safety, all newly hired certified staff (teachers, principals, and other administrators) are required to have both state and national criminal records checks. State criminal records checks are required for all classified employees (secretaries, custodians, bus drivers, and so on) and volunteers who have contact with students on a regularly scheduled or continuous basis, or who have supervisory responsibility for students at school or on school-sponsored trips.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

- ➔ House Bill 1, enacted in 2001, defines the crime of **terroristic threatening** in the first, second, and third degrees. It increases penalties for bomb threats or other false statements that would cause the evacuation of buildings (such as fire alarms) and for making threats about killing or injuring people on school property or at school functions. It also increases penalties for use of bombs or weapons of mass destruction resulting in injury to others, and use of such weapons in schools or government agencies even if no one is injured.

RESULTS

- In 1999-2000, 125 school districts wrote proposals and received grants to help improve school safety; in 2000-2001, each school district received a grant of $20,000 plus a set per pupil amount.

- The Kentucky Center for School Safety has a clearinghouse and Web site for safe school information, provides support for student "anti-violence" groups, has developed a School-Centered Emergency Management Guide along with a training program, and is working to support and improve alternative education sites throughout the state. See below for contact information.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ **Become familiar** with your district and school discipline codes.
- ★ **Offer** to serve on the school or district committees studying safety and discipline issues.
- ★ **Visit the Kentucky Center for School Safety Web site** for the latest information and resources on school safety at www.kysafeschools.org.
- ★ **Get a copy** of the Partnership for Kentucky Schools' two toolkits to use in your school. *Turn Up the Volume* offers schools and school communities guidance on how to plan and carry out strategies for listening to and talking with students about how they experience school, teaching, and learning. *Safe and Welcoming Schools* outlines research on the relationship between safe and welcoming schools, employee strategies for creating a welcoming school environment, and characteristics of a welcoming school. See below for contact information.
- ★ **Work** with your PTA/PTO/PTSA to plan programs that inform parents and solicit the assistance of parents in establishing a safe and orderly environment in your school.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Center for School Safety**, Eastern Kentucky University, (877) 805-4277 or visit the Web site at www.kysafeschools.org.
- **Kentucky Department of Education**, Division of Student, Family, and Community Support, (502) 564-3678 or (800) 533-5372 or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.
- **Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Web site at www.pfks.org.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.

NOTES:

TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS)

- **Technology** includes computers, instructional and administrative software, telephones, telecommunications, interactive video, satellite, and microwave communication.
- The Kentucky Board of Education has adopted a **master plan for technology** to improve learning and teaching, and facilitate administrative functions, such as financial management and pupil attendance.
- The **vision** is to support getting to proficiency for all Kentucky students through ensuring equal access to technology, enabling students to use technology to become independent life-long learners, preparing teachers to use technology to raise student achievement, and equipping Kentucky's children to work in the Information Age.
- The Kentucky Board of Education has established **regulations to prevent sexually explicit material** from being transmitted through technology. Schools and school districts must use the latest available technology to prevent use of such materials. They have installed special filtering and monitoring software on their networks, revised acceptable use policies for student and faculty use of Internet and electronic mail, and limited student use of electronic mail to the state standard system which includes the capability to monitor and track e-mail activity. See http://www.kde.state.ky.us/oet/sits/planning/sb230/sb230.asp for more information.
- **Technology standards** for new and experienced teachers are required by state regulation. This means that every new teacher and every experienced teacher will soon be required to demonstrate the ability to use technology to support instruction; to access and manipulate data; to enhance professional growth and productivity; to communicate and collaborate with colleagues, parents, and the community; and to conduct research and solve problems. These standards may be viewed at: http://www.kde.state.ky.us/otec/epsb/standards/default.asp.
- The Department of Education is required to **conduct studies** of the effective use of technology including classroom use and effects, training for teachers, ratios of computers to students and teachers, use by administrators, effectiveness and use of funds given to local districts, and expenditures by districts.

RESULTS

- Implementation of the Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) is described in a **Master Plan for Education Technology**. Originally adopted in 1992, the plan is updated every two years to reflect progress, update the budget, and incorporate new standards and policies. Phase I of this plan has been implemented and the department completed Phase II planning in the spring of 2000. Every school district has a local technology plan which describes how the local district will implement the statewide plan. See the 2001 Master Plan Update at http://www.kde.state.ky.us/oet/sits/planning/mpupdate2001/2001_2006_final/default_final.asp.

- The Department of Education is participating in several national and regional studies on the effective use of technology in the classroom. In August 1998, the Milken Foundation released an analysis of Kentucky's technology implementation as part of a national study. Milken's conclusion: "Kentucky clearly has made progress toward fully implementing technology in all its schools. It looks strong in comparison to the overall findings of the 21 states, which are themselves likely above the national average in school technology achievements." (The entire report may be viewed at http://www.kde.state.ky.us/oet/sits/planning/milkenrpt/milkenrpt.asp.)

- **Equity and equitable access** is an underlying theme of KETS. Low- and high-income districts in Kentucky have equal access to technology funds, equal access to quality of service, and equal buying power.

- **Standards for the purchase of technology** have been established and the state must bid for technology equipment to get the best price. State KETS funds can only be used for equipment that meets KETS standards.

- **State funds are matched** by local districts for the purchase of technology equipment. The amount of local district funds required and spent to support technology significantly supplements funds available from KETS.

- As of July 1, 2001, Kentucky schools had:

  ✓ One networked computer capable of running multimedia software for every 6.2 students
  ✓ One networked computer for every 1.2 teachers

  In addition:

  ✓ approximately 98 percent of classrooms have **Internet and e-mail** access
  ✓ 100 percent of teachers have access to **e-mail**
  ✓ 70 percent of districts have a **home page**
  ✓ 56 percent of classrooms have **telephones**.

- The **goal** is one computer for every six students, one for every teacher, and every classroom with a direct, high-speed connection to the Internet. Funds are made available annually to assist replacing out-dated computers.

- Every school district and every school has a **technology coordinator**. The Kentucky Board of Education encourages districts to also have a dedicated technology resource teacher who use state technology funds for this purpose.

- Since 1992, **over $600 million** in state and local funds has been spent on technology; approximately 95 percent has been used for student learning purposes and five percent for administrative purposes.

- Since June 1995, all of Kentucky's 176 school districts have been **connected to the statewide computer network**. At this time, 97 percent of Kentucky schools have direct, high-speed access to the KETS Network. Until all schools have high speed connections, toll-free dial-in services are available via modem.

- The **Student Technology Leadership Program** was initiated in 1994. This school-based program allows students to apply their technology skills to solve school and community problems and is currently in place in over 800 schools. Research by the Appalachian Technology Education Consortium is currently underway to ensure the program is as effective as teachers and education officials believe it is.

- The **Kentucky Virtual High School (KVHS)** was created in the winter of 2000 to provide high school classes online for Kentucky students. See www.kvhs.org for more information. Also see High Schools on page 28.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- All school districts must submit updates each year to their unmet need reports for the use of technology. The **plans** must comply with the state master plan. The technology plan is part of the consolidated plan.

- School districts will continue to purchase technology equipment and instructional software with state and local dollars. State funds will be matched by local funds. The General Assembly allocated $20 million per year for technology for 2000-01 and $15 million for 2001-02.

- Teachers and technology coordinators continue to use **professional development** to learn more about the use of technology for educational purposes.

- District administrators continue to learn how to use the new computerized financial management system. This affects school council budgeting and purchasing.

- Kentucky will probably adopt the standards established by the International Society for Technology Education which describes what students should know and be able to do with technology. Visit their Web site at www.ISTE.org for more information.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Find out** what is happening with technology in your school or school district. How many computers are available to students? How many hours per week do students work on a computer? Does your school have high speed connections to the Internet? What computer programs are used and what do students use computers for?

★ To learn more, **review** the district plan. Be aware that technology planning has been integrated into the school-based consolidated planning. Become active in your school's planning, and advocate for technology that is thoroughly integrated into the curriculum of your school by focusing on:

- ✓ Staff technology competencies and professional development for teachers
- ✓ Integration of technology with learner outcomes and core content
- ✓ Role of technology in assisting students to achieve at higher levels
- ✓ Curriculum strengths and weaknesses
- ✓ Use of technology purchased prior to the KETS program in combination with the new equipment

★ If you are able to access the Internet, **visit** the Kentucky Department of Education Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us to learn more about technology and consolidated planning. This site provides more information about up-to-date KETS negotiated prices and KETS standards. If you don't have access to a computer, try using one at a school or local public library.

★ **Talk** with students about technology. Ask them how much time they spend on computers and how computers are used for learning in their school.

★ **Encourage** your school principal and staff to attend the annual Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference as a professional development activity. It will be held March 7-9, 2002 in Louisville. For more information, see http://www.kde.state.ky.us/ktlc.

★ If you have computer expertise, **volunteer** to tutor students, help develop the local district or school plan, or participate with the Student Technology Leadership Program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Education Technology** at (502) 564-2020 ext. 231, or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.
- **Technology Assistance Team** at the Regional Service Center in your area. See http://www.kde.state.ky.us/oapd/rsc/default.asp for a list and phone numbers. See also pages 62-63.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- **Professional development** for teachers and other certified employees is required for all teachers who must attend a minimum of four days each year. Time is set aside in the school calendar for that purpose. School districts may plan one of those four days. School councils determine how to use the remaining three days, which must be consistent with the school's consolidated plan and the school's professional development plan and be based on disaggregated student performance data and teachers' individual growth plans.

- The law requires that 65 percent of a district's **professional development funds** be allocated to school councils. So teachers, parents, and the principal at the school can determine what additional training is needed to improve student performance.

- The **Effective Instructional Leadership Act** creates a statewide program to improve and maintain the quality of instructional leadership in Kentucky. All staff in leadership positions that require certification, such as principals and other administrators, are required to have training each year in a program focused on becoming better instructional leaders. They must have six hours each year in the effective evaluation of teachers.

- **Superintendents** are required to complete 42 hours of training every two years under provisions of the Kentucky Leadership Act in order to be employed as a superintendent in Kentucky. There are penalties for non-compliance.

- The **Teachers Professional Growth Fund** was created to provide teachers with high quality professional development to improve content knowledge and teaching methods in core disciplines. Between 2000 and 2004, it will be used for middle school teachers with a focus on mathematics for the first two years. The first year $750,000 was available, and this year $1.25 million is available.

- The **Center for Middle School Academic Achievement** was established to improve content knowledge and instructional practices of middle school teachers through professional development, technical assistance, and research. It is housed jointly at Eastern Kentucky University and Murray State University and has a $400,000 budget this year.

- **Teacher academies,** funded with $2.1 million this year, provide training sessions focused on core disciplines. They are offered by the Kentucky Department of Education in cooperation with colleges and universities. Almost 800 educators participated in the summer of 2000.

- Teachers who apply for **National Board Certification** are eligible for support as they work on their application. Those who are successful receive additional pay as long as they remain in the classroom or if they serve as a mentor teacher. Funds for this program double this year to $800,000.

- Teachers may continue to use **flexible in-service programs** to meet their four-day requirement for professional development but they must use this time for programs that relate to their individual growth plan, content area, or school improvement plans.

- **Teacher evaluation and growth plans** are required of each school district and are based on standards established by the Department of Education. Beginning this year (2001-02), the department will conduct on-site visits to review these plans in no less than 15 school districts. Districts found deficient will receive technical assistance.

- The Department of Education is required to establish an **electronic bulletin board** with information about professional development opportunities.

RESULTS

- **The state provides districts with $23 per pupil** per year for professional development. Additional funds were allocated for more specific purposes in the 2000 General Assembly. (See above.)

- Every district and every school has a **professional development plan** as part of the school consolidated plan.

- The Kentucky Department of Education has re-organized the **eight regional service centers to focus more on teaching and learning**. Specialists are available in content areas such as mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies. The purpose is to offer teachers the assistance and professional development they need to offer high quality instruction and continuous student improvement. The current focus is working with schools whose CATS accountability index is below 40 (on a scale of 0-140), helping schools and districts with consolidated planning, and providing teacher academies in science, math, reading, and social studies.

- District professional development coordinators will be organizing the scholastic audit process in schools identified as Level 1 and 2. See pages 5-6 for more information.

- The **Kentucky Leadership Academy,** a two-year training program, was created to provide additional professional development for principals and teachers. Over 300 educators are trained in each two-year session.

- The **Principles of Excellence Network** is a valuable forum for sharing learning and networking for some of Kentucky's most respected leaders. It was formed by the Department of Education to celebrate leadership excellence and provide support for continued improvement. About 40 of Kentucky's top principals are participating as part of an ongoing professional development program.

- The **Kentucky Department of Education** has developed a research-based strategy for schools and districts to use in analyzing their current professional development programs and policies. The goal is to create a local professional development structure that supports the school as a learning community focused on teacher and student success.

- There is an increased **integration of technology** in professional development through academic villages, teacher electronic networks, and the annual Kentucky Education Technology Conference.
- The **Commonwealth Institute for Teachers** is held each summer and provides special training opportunities for teachers focused on teacher leadership.
- More than 75 percent of 1,300 teachers surveyed reported that the quality of professional development has improved.
- All superintendents have completed a **training program and assessment center** process set up by the state Department of Education. New superintendents have one year to complete the process. Finance and school law are two primary topics of this training.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Expect professional development offerings to continue to improve and to focus on content, instruction, and its link to assessment. Teachers have no time to waste on poor in-service programs. They need to be selective in choosing professional development that meets their needs.
- Watch for professional development to begin changing from "in-service days" to new and different activities such as study groups, classroom research, observing other teachers teaching, networking with other teachers, and being observed and critiqued by other teachers.
- Expect more attention on professional development in schools with poor student achievement.
- Professional development, resource information, and support is available through Kentucky's eight regional service centers.

Region 1:	Murray State University, Calloway County (270) 762-3217
Region 2:	Western Kentucky University, Warren County (270) 746-7063
Region 3:	Jefferson County Schools/Gheens Academy, Jefferson County (502) 485-3850
Region 4:	Northern Kentucky University, Kenton County (859) 292-6778
Region 5:	University of Kentucky, Fayette County (859) 257-4907
Region 6:	London, Laurel County (606) 862-0282

Region 7: Morehead State University, Rowan County
(606) 783-5372
Region 8: Prestonsburg, Floyd County
(606) 886-0205

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Ask** teachers and principals the following questions: Does professional development:

- ✓ Connect to improving student learning?
- ✓ Meet the needs of teachers and administrators?
- ✓ Address learning needs identified by data on student achievement?
- ✓ Provide time and follow-up support?
- ✓ Model effective teaching for all students?
- ✓ Use principles of adult learning?
- ✓ Increase teachers' knowledge of subject matter?
- ✓ Emphasize ongoing improvement in teaching?
- ✓ Improve skills, leadership, and teamwork?
- ✓ Involve teachers in decisions?

★ **Ask** if you can sit in on professional development sessions that interest you.

★ **Understand** that teachers need time without students to plan, study, discuss, and learn improved teaching methods.

★ **Call** the Partnership for Kentucky Schools and ask for copies of their reports on professional development. Also ask for their Professional Development Planning and Resource Guide, which addresses issues around providing quality professional development. **Share** these documents with your school council and educators in your school. See below for contact information.

★ **Attend** local school board meetings. Ask school board members what they plan to do to support improved professional development in your district.

★ **Ask** your school council if it has a professional development committee and how it plans to use its professional development funds. Volunteer to serve on the committee that makes those recommendations to the council.

★ **Write** to your elected officials with specific examples of successes or problems. See page 81 for information on contacting state legislators.

★ **Participate** in the scholastic audit process. For more information visit the department's Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us under scholastic audit.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Leadership and School Improvment** at (502) 564-2116 or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.
- **Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org or visit the Web site at www.pfks.org.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.
- The **Regional Service Center** in your area. (See pages 62-63 for a list and phone numbers.)

NOTES:

TEACHER PREPARATION AND THE EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BOARD

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- The **Education Professional Standards Board** is responsible for:
  - ✓ establishing teacher training and certification standards for all educators who work in schools
  - ✓ setting standards for, approving, and evaluating teacher education programs at colleges and universities
  - ✓ issuing, renewing, and revoking teaching certificates
  - ✓ maintaining data and submitting reports on trends in teacher employment
  - ✓ developing guidelines and being trained to deal with reports of sexual misconduct by professionals
  - ✓ setting policies for alternative training programs. This allows experts and professionals who have college but not education degrees to become classroom teachers, and is intended to make it easier for highly skilled and knowledgeable persons to enter teaching, especially in areas where there are shortages.
  - ✓ developing a professional code of ethics

- Additional responsibilities were legislated in 2000 including **broader responsibility** for teacher preparation and professional development including:
  - ✓ setting **accreditation standards** for colleges of education that reflect national standards
  - ✓ **discontinuing approval of colleges of education** that do not meet standards or whose students fail to meet criteria established by the board
  - ✓ conducting an **annual review of diversity** in teacher education programs and providing assistance to schools in addressing diversity
  - ✓ defining information needed to make good policy decisions about the teaching profession for a comprehensive **data system**
  - ✓ **defining out-of-field teaching** for purposes in Kentucky, collecting information on the number of out-of-field teachers and providing that information to the Department of Education
  - ✓ **informing the public** on the status of teaching
  - ✓ creating rules to provide **alternative routes to certification** for teachers and administrators
  - ✓ promoting one or more **innovative alternative preparation programs** through a college or university

- The **Education Professional Standards Board members** include nine classroom teachers, two school administrators (one of whom is a principal), the commissioner of education, the president of the Council on Postsecondary Education, one local school board member, two deans of education from state universities, and one chief academic officer from a private nonprofit college or university.

- To teach in Kentucky schools, teachers must achieve professional certification by successfully completing a college teacher preparation program and a one-year internship. There are six **alternative routes to certification** that college-educated persons, who have not completed a teacher education program, can use to become certified. These include:

  - ✓ **Local district training program**: Districts work together with colleges or universities to train teachers on the job. Candidates must meet certain qualifications. Jefferson County Public Schools is the only district using this option.

  - ✓ **Exceptional work experience**: Persons with 10 years of exceptional work experience and a bachelor's degree with a grade point average of 2.5 or higher, may be certified as high school teachers in the area of their expertise with Standards Board approval.

  - ✓ **University-based option**: The Standards Board is authorized to approve alternative route training programs at Kentucky colleges or universities. (New in 2000.) Programs for teachers have been approved at Murray State, University of Louisville, Eastern Kentucky University, Northern Kentucky University, and Union College. Western Kentucky University has a program for alternative routes to principal certification. Western and Morehead State are expected to submit alternative route teacher training programs very soon.

  - ✓ **Veterans of the armed forces option**: Veterans honorably discharged after six years or more with a bachelor's degree in the subject to be taught, a grade point average of 2.5 or higher or an advanced degree, and passing scores on subject matter tests, may be certified to teach.

  - ✓ **College faculty provision**: University or college teachers may receive certification to teach at the high school level if they have a master's or doctor's degree in the subject for which they seek certification, and five years of full-time teaching experience.

  Candidates in these five programs must successfully complete the Kentucky Teacher Internship Program (KTIP) during their first year of teaching in order to be fully certified.

  - ✓ **the adjunct instructor**: A person who has expertise in areas like music, art, foreign languages, drama, science and other specialty areas may be employed in a part-time position by a local board of education.

- Teachers maintain certification by successfully completing continuing education. Within 10 years, teachers must complete a master's degree or an approved "fifth year program". Credit may be given for university courses, field-based experiences, individual research, and approved professional development activities. The board has established a system to ensure high-quality continuing education.

- Teachers are paid on a salary schedule based on education and years of teaching experience. Rank 1 is the highest level teachers can achieve.
- Colleges and universities are encouraged to use $4 million of the Regional University Excellence Trust Fund to address issues of **teacher quality, teacher preparation, and professional development**. Four regional (comprehensive) universities have applied for these funds and have met the criteria established by law N Murray State, Morehead State, Eastern Kentucky, and Western Kentucky.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

- ➔ Colleges of education are required to publish an **annual report card** that includes basic program information, enrollment data, certification exam pass rates, satisfactory survey results, and so on. The first reports will be published September 2001.
- ➔ The Education Professional Standards Board was separated from the Department of Education and made an **independent agency** in the Office of the Governor by an executive order in June 2000 which was enacted as law in 2001.
- ➔ **Regional P-16 councils**, educators from primary school through colleges and universities, can now receive matching funds from the Council on Postsecondary Education. The purpose of these councils is to improve communication and work together to improve education for students at all levels.
- ➔ The legislature created a Subcommittee on Teacher Compensation to review Kentucky's method of paying teachers in an effort to find ways to recruit and retain high quality teachers.

RESULTS

- **Standards for new teachers, experienced teachers, new and experienced counselors, and administrators** (principals and superintendents) have been established by the Education Professional Standards Board. Work in Kentucky and with a consortium of other states continues in the development of assessments to be used to ensure that teachers and administrators have met these standards. The Interstate School Leaders License Consortium Administrator Standards have been adopted as Kentucky's standards for administrators.
- In January 1998, colleges and universities began new **performance-based preparation programs** designed to prepare teachers with the knowledge and skills specified in the New Teacher Standards and to achieve Kentucky's goals for students and schools.
- **A P-16 Council (primary school through college)** includes representatives from the Kentucky Board of Education, the Council on Postsecondary Education, and the Education Professional Standards Board. Its goal is to coordinate efforts between elementary and secondary schools and colleges and universities. Its initial focus has been on aligning the curriculum so elementary, middle, and high schools are better preparing students for colleges

and colleges are better preparing teachers to work in Kentucky schools. Regional councils can now receive funding. See What's New This Year? above.

- **Kentucky has 75 teachers certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards**. The goal of the legislature and the board is to have one National Board certified teacher in every public school. Funds ($400,000 in 2000-01 and $800,000 in 2001-02) have been allocated to support this goal.

- The **Kentucky Teacher Internship Program (KTIP)** provides extra support for and an assessment of teachers in their first year of teaching. Mentors offer advice, information and support with an emphasis on professional growth. This process is designed to enhance the ability of new teachers to reflect on and analyze their teaching and make the curricular and instructional adjustments necessary for ensuring maximum student learning. Teachers must successfully complete this internship program in order to be certified.

- **Stipends are available for resource teachers** who mentor teacher interns and **cooperating teachers** who supervise student teachers. In addition, up to six hours of tuition-free classes are available for these teachers each year.

- The Department of Education, with other partners, is required to have a **statewide recruitment plan** to encourage qualified persons to enter the teaching profession and seek employment in Kentucky. For this effort, $515,000 has been allocated.

- The Education Professional Standards Board is responsible for developing a **comprehensive data system** in cooperation with the department of Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education. Its goal is to provide good information on the profession of teaching to help policy-makers as they work to improve the quality of teaching in Kentucky.

- Professional development may be used to replace up to 12 graduate hours in **the fifth-year (Rank II) program** with university approval. (Within 10 years, teachers must complete a fifth-year program to continue teaching in Kentucky. This can be a master's degree or completion of a certain number of hours of advanced work or professional development.) The Experienced Teacher Standards are used as the basis for all fifth-year programs.

- A **continuing education option**, based on experienced teacher standards, is another way teachers can move into Rank I or Rank II. It is a rigorous portfolio and performance-based process that must address student achievement. Over 500 teachers have completed or are working on this process.

- Kentucky teachers who have met requirements for Rank II and are certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards qualify for Rank I. In the past, a teacher qualified for Rank I only with 30 hours of college credit in addition to a master's degree.

- Between 1990 and June 2000, the Education Professional Standards Board received a total of 1,892 requests for **review for disciplinary action** for educators. From January 1995 through

July 1998, it issued a total of 144 final orders for revocation, suspension, or agreed settlements. This compares to 14 revocations from 1985 to 1990.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- There is a growing interest in teaching quality in Kentucky as the state works to reach proficiency in student achievement. Research shows that the quality of teaching is one of the most important factors in student achievement. Watch for more conversation about teaching and teacher compensation with possible legislative action during the 2002 session of the General Assembly.

- Listen for more conversation about teacher preparation as colleges and universities work to improve their programs through university-wide participation of faculty (arts and sciences along with education faculty).

- Watch for more regional P-16 councils to form and work together to improve education.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- If your school or school district has an urgent need for teachers in special areas, **suggest** the development of an alternative training program or the use of one of the other alternative routes to certification.

- **Speak well** of teaching as a profession. **Encourage talented young people**, both male and female, of all racial or ethnic backgrounds, and from all regions of Kentucky, to consider teaching as a career. Recognize good teaching in your school and school district.

- **Inform others** in your community by getting copies of the Partnership for Kentucky Schools' eight-part newspaper ad series on the attributes of quality teaching and ask your local paper to run them. Share them with other parents in your school. See below for contact information.

- **Ask** college professors from arts and sciences as well as colleges of education, what they are doing to improve the way teachers are prepared.

- **Report** persons holding teaching certificates (teachers, administrators, principals, superintendents) whom you believe to be guilty of immorality, misconduct, or incompetence serious enough to have their teaching certificate revoked. Contact your local school district, or the Education Professional Standards Board at (502) 573-4606.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Education Professional Standards Board** at (502) 573-4606 or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us and look under Education Professional Standards Board.
- **Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org or visit the Web site at www.pfks.org.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.

SCHOOL FINANCE

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- **Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK)** is the basic funding formula used to allocate state dollars to school districts.

- Districts are guaranteed a certain allotment for each student. The **base guarantee per pupil** for 2001-02 is $3,066. Additional funds are provided for exceptional students, economically-disadvantaged students, transportation, and students served in home and hospital settings. The base SEEK per pupil allotment varies depending on the differing needs of the districts.

- **Local districts participate** in the SEEK program by raising no less than 30 cents per $100 assessed property evaluation or its equivalent. The state provides additional funds to meet the minimum guaranteed amount.

- **Tier 1** allows districts to raise an additional 15 percent of revenue above the base without referendum, which is equalized to 150 percent of the state's average per pupil assessment. In the 1999-2000 school year, 167 of 176 school districts were eligible for Tier 1.

- **Tier 2** allows districts to raise an additional 30 percent of revenue above the base plus Tier 1, subject to referendum. This is not matched by the state and sets the cap or maximum difference in spending allowed by law.

- Local districts must levy no less than an additional 5 cents (or its equivalent) to participate in the **Facilities Support Program of Kentucky (FSPK) and the School Facilities Construction Commission** program.

- **Additional state funding** is provided to school districts for:

  - ✓ preschool programs
  - ✓ extended school services
  - ✓ programs for gifted and talented students
  - ✓ professional development
  - ✓ technology
  - ✓ family resource and youth services centers
  - ✓ vocational/technical programs and transportation
  - ✓ textbooks
  - ✓ school safety programs

- School districts are required to provide funds to each school council based on a **school council allocation formula**, adopted by the Kentucky Board of Education.

RESULTS

- The **gap in per pupil expenditures** between low wealth, property-poor school districts, and high wealth districts has been reduced by over 36.9 percent between 1989-90 and 1998-99.
- According to the National Center for Education Statistics, **Kentucky ranks 30th in the nation in per pupil expenditures**, increasing from $3,745 in 1989-90 to $6,125 in 1997-98. The national per pupil expenditure for that year was $6,662. Kentucky's rank was 40th in 1989-90. (Source: Digest of Education Statistics, 2000; National Center for Education Statistics, Washington, D.C.)
- Teacher salaries on average have increased from $26,292 in 1989-90 to $36,255 in 1999-2000. The 1999-2000 estimated national average is $41,820. These figures show Kentucky has moved from 38th in the nation to 33rd. (Source: American Federation of Teachers)
- According to the Office of Education Accountability, state funding for Kentucky schools increased more than 69 percent from 1989-90 to 1998-99. Local support jumped 122 percent during that period.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Attend** school council meetings and ask about funding priorities in your school.

★ **Attend** school board meetings and ask how much money your district received last year, how the money was spent, and what the spending priorities are this year.

★ **Volunteer** to serve on or assist the district's Facility Planning Committee when one is appointed. Attend its meetings.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Department of Education, Office of District Support Services, Division of Finance** at (502) 564-3846 or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org

GOVERNANCE

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- Kentucky school law provides for **shared leadership** with certain decisions made at each level M state, district, and school. In Kentucky, many decisions are made at the school level. For example, school-based decision making allows teachers and parents the opportunity to make decisions about learning for their students. See page 46 for more information.

- The **Kentucky Board of Education** is responsible for directing policy for elementary and secondary education. Members are appointed by the governor for staggered four-year terms. They must have no less than an associate's degree or its equivalent. Appointees must be approved by the Kentucky General Assembly.

- The **Council on Postsecondary Education** coordinates and provides oversight for Kentucky's public colleges and universities and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS). The board for KCTCS provides coordination for Kentucky community and technical colleges.

- A state **P-16 Council** (primary school through college) has been voluntarily created by the Kentucky Board of Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education to coordinate efforts to improve education at all levels. Regional P-16 Councils or Councils of Partners have been created in some regions of Kentucky and can receive matching funds from the Council on Postsecondary Education for their work.

- The **Kentucky Department of Education** is located in Frankfort but has eight Regional Service Centers to provide information and assistance to local schools and districts. (See pages 62-63 for a list of centers.) A toll-free number, (800) 533-5372, is maintained by department staff to answer questions.

- The **Office of Education Accountability** in the Legislative Research Commission has the responsibility of monitoring the education system. A toll-free number, (800) 242-0520, is available to report concerns or ask questions.

- Kentucky school law includes the following provisions for elementary and secondary schools:

    - ✓ In most cases, a **superintendent's relatives** cannot work in his or her school district. This rule does not apply to a relative who is an employee of the district for at least 36 months before a superintendent assumes office, or to an employee who marries a relative of the superintendent as long as he or she is qualified for that job. A superintendent's spouse who has at least 20 years of service as a school employee may be employed in the district.

- ✓ **Principals cannot employ relatives** at their schools, but relatives employed before July 1990 are exempt under current law. Spouses are exempt if:
    - ➤ the spouse was employed in that school in the 1989-90 school year and
    - ➤ there is no other position in the district for which the spouse is certified or
    - ➤ the spouse is in a district where there is no more than one elementary, middle and/or high school.

- ✓ If a principal's spouse is employed in that principal's school, he or she must be evaluated by another administrator.

- ✓ **School board members** must have a high school diploma or GED.

- ✓ **Campaign contributions** to school board candidates are limited to $100 from individuals and $200 from organizations for each election.

- ✓ **School board members** cannot ask school employees for campaign contributions or services.

- ✓ When there is a **vacancy on the school board**, the state commissioner of education appoints members to serve until the next election.

- ✓ The local school board hires the superintendent with advice from a screening committee that includes two teachers, a principal, a local school board member, and a parent. A minority parent is added if there is no minority on the committee and the district has 8 percent or more minority students enrolled. The school board makes the final **superintendent selection** and may pick someone not recommended by the committee.

- ✓ The school board can, by four-fifths vote and approval of the state education commissioner, break a **superintendent's contract** for cause.

- ✓ The **local school board** establishes district-wide goals for education; hires the superintendent; decides when and where to build new school facilities; provides services; manages all school funds and property for the district; and sets rules and regulations for school property management. It transacts business for the district, sets tax rates, and establishes qualifications for all employees.

- ✓ **Local school boards and superintendents** create guidelines and general requirements for school operations. School-based decision making councils make curricular and instructional (what is taught and how) decisions for their school. The district and board provide support and assistance for councils to do their work.

- ✓ The Kentucky Board of Education is authorized to **waive** any of its **regulations** when a school district or school shows it can produce the same results without the regulation, or when hardship or just cause is a factor.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- ★ If your school has a school-based decision making council, **run** for a school council seat, volunteer to serve on a council committee, or offer to help the PTA/PTO/PTSA with elections. If there is no PTA in your school, form one. Call the Kentucky PTA office at (502) 564-4378.

- ★ **Encourage** good candidates to run for school board offices or apply for appointment when vacancies occur between elections. Consider running for a school board seat.

- ★ To **learn more about service as a school board member, call** the Partnership for Kentucky Schools at (859) 455-9595 and ask for a copy of the report prepared with the Kentucky School Boards Association and the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce called *Difficult Ground: Community Leaders and School Board Service in Kentucky*. Also request a copy of "What if." a booklet that provides guidelines for people interested in running for school board seats.

- ★ **Attend** local school board meetings. Be informed about local school board elections.

- ★ **Vote** in school board and school council elections.

- ★ **Ask** your superintendent if there is a P-16 Council or Council of Partners in your region. Encourage your district to participate or to get involved in organizing one if that has not been done.

- ★ **Support** superior performance from school board members, administrators, and teachers.

- ★ If you have questions about whether the law is being followed in your district, **talk** with your principal, superintendent, or school board members. If that does not correct the problem or answer your questions, contact the Office of Education Accountability at (800) 242-0520.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Council on Postsecondary Education**, (502) 573-1555 or visit the Web site at www.cpe.state.ky.us.
- **Kentucky Association of School Councils**, (859) 238-2188.
- **Kentucky Community and Technical College System**, (859) 246-3146, or visit the Web site at www.kctcs.net.
- **Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Legal Services**, (502) 564-4474, or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.
- **Kentucky School Boards Association**, (502) 695-4630.
- **Office of Education Accountability**, (800) 242-0520.
- **Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org or visit the Web site at www.pfks.org.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL SCHEDULES AND CALENDARS

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- There is nothing in the law that requires schools or districts to change their calendars or schedules. However, the 1994 General Assembly passed a resolution asking the Kentucky Department of Education to promote the idea of **year-round school calendars** and assist schools and districts in gathering information and establishing year-round schools, if interested. Decisions about changing school calendars are left to local districts.

- The 1996 General Assembly gave schools **more flexibility** in setting school calendars (length of the school year and school day) as long as 1,050 hours of instruction are provided for students. This is equal to 175 six-hour days. This includes flexibility for half-day students as long as 525 hours of instruction are provided.

RESULTS

- Some school districts and some schools are now using a **year-round calendar** that includes the same number of instructional days for students with a different schedule. The following are examples of how schools and districts have decided to operate. There are many other possibilities:
  - ✓ One school begins in early August, holds school for nine weeks and then is off for three weeks. This cycle is repeated until school lets out in late June for a six-week break. The three-week intercessions can be used for tutoring, special trips and activities, professional development and planning, or as a break.
  - ✓ Another school begins early in August and ends in late June. It holds classes that focus on academic subjects on Tuesday through Friday. On Monday, students and teachers may come to school (most students do) for field trips, extracurricular activities, intramural sports, and tutoring. This school takes the same days off as the rest of the school district; it just starts earlier and ends later.

- A school district may **dismiss students early** one day a week and make up the time by adding more days to the 175 required instructional days. They could also make up the time by adding a few minutes to each school day. The early dismissal day provides time for teachers to study and plan together.

- Some high schools are adopting **block scheduling**. Students take fewer subjects with longer class periods during the semester. Each semester, students change schedules, so they take the same number of courses or more in a more concentrated time frame.

WHAT TO EXPECT

☞ Many school districts are forming **local task forces** to study ways to use school time more efficiently and effectively. They are reviewing research about how the school day, week, and year can be reorganized to enhance student learning and support teachers by providing more time for planning and professional development.

☞ Early **lessons learned** by schools and districts that should be considered when studying changes in scheduling include:

- ✓ making sure there is adequate time to plan before changing to a different schedule
- ✓ involving all persons and groups who are affected by these changes such as teachers, parents, and students, as well as community, business, and church leaders
- ✓ using a decision-making process that is fair and based on the needs of the local community
- ✓ realizing that such changes challenge local culture and traditions
- ✓ being sure teachers reorganize their lesson plans to cover the same material in different ways
- ✓ making sure changes are made for the right reason M to improve academic achievement for students

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Ask** if your district or any schools in your district are considering a different schedule. Ask about the purpose of those considerations. Is it to improve student learning? Is it to decrease costs? Is it to use the available building space more efficiently and perhaps avoid building new schools?

★ If your high school has adopted block scheduling, **ask** how that has affected student learning.

★ **Volunteer** to serve on a committee that is studying these issues.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Department of Education**, 800-533-5372 or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.
- **Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Web site at www.pfks.org; ask for a copy of their study and report on restructuring time.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

THE BASICS OF THE LAW

- **Kentucky law states**: "The General Assembly recognizes that public education involves shared responsibilities. State government, local communities, parents, students, and school employees must work together to create an efficient public school system. Parents and students must assist schools with efforts to assure student attendance, preparation for school, and involvement in learning. The cooperation of all involved is necessary to assure that desired outcomes are achieved . . ."

- In addition the law recognizes the **importance of parent involvement** by requiring the following:

  - ✓ Parents are members of school-based decision making councils at each school, making important decisions about school issues around learning and instruction.
  - ✓ One of the critical attributes of the primary program is positive parent involvement.
  - ✓ The preschool program requires that schools involve parents.
  - ✓ Parents are required members of local family resource and youth services center advisory councils and must make up no less than one-third of the membership.
  - ✓ The membership of superintendent screening committees includes parents.
  - ✓ The state board requires that parents be represented on local facilities planning groups that study the building and redistricting needs of school districts.
  - ✓ Parents are represented on the School Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability Council that advises the board of education on development of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System.
  - ✓ Federal law requires that parents be included on individual education planning meetings for students with special learning needs.
  - ✓ State law provides for four of the 19 members of the Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education to be parents.
  - ✓ Parents are included on school audit teams.

- **Parents are defined**, for the purpose of school-based decision making, as parents, stepparents, or foster parents, or a person who has legal custody of a student and with whom the student resides.

- The Kentucky Board of Education has a **policy statement** titled *Parent and Family Involvement Initiative* that recognizes the importance of the family's role in educating children. It encourages schools to welcome parents and families and engage them in their child's education.

- Yearly school and district report cards are required by law to give parents and citizens more information about their schools. See page 7 for more details.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

➔ The Kentucky Department of Education has created a section on its Web site for parents. You can sign up for updates from the department, see your school report card and find other valuable information. Visit it at http://www.kde.state.ky.us/parents, or go to www.kde.state.ky.us and click on "For Parents" at the bottom of the first page.

➔ The Partnership Cadre for School and Community Development is a group selected and trained by the Partnership for Kentucky Schools to help schools and communities as they work together to improve student achievement. See below for contact information.

RESULTS

- A 50-member **Commissioner's Parent Advisory Council** has been created to advise the Commissioner of Education on policy issues and increase the positive leadership of parents for improving public education in Kentucky. The commissioner meets with this state-level council four times each year.

- The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence sponsors the **Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership**. The first institute of 100 parents was held in the fall of 1997. Each year since 1998, about 225 parents have been selected for this program. These institutes prepare parents to work in their own communities to engage more parents in working to improve student achievement. Call (800) 928-2111, or Lexington area 233-9849, for more information.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

★ **Apply** for the Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership. Call the Prichard Committee at (800) 928-2111, or Lexington area 233-9849, for more information, or visit the Web site at www.cipl.org. Applicants for 2002 will be sought in the spring of 2002.

★ **Review** your school and district report cards, available from your school or district offices and in the parent section of the Kentucky Department of Education Web site.

★ **Ask** to see your schools expanded school report card and study student scores broken out by gender, race, poverty and so on. Have a PTA or parent information meeting to share this information and talk about what parents can do to help improve achievement for all students.

★ **Ask** to see a copy of the Core Content for Assessment and the Program of Studies, guides for teachers to use as they prepare curriculum and instruction. Visit the Department of Education Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us, or call the Prichard Committee at (800) 928-2111 for a copy. The Kentucky Association of School Councils has Core Content Cards (859) 238-2188. Hold a discussion about curriculum and instruction with the PTA, school council curriculum committee, or other groups of parents.

★ **Ask** to see a copy of your School Consolidated Plan to see what is planned to improve student learning. **Get involved** with the consolidated planning process at your school.

★ **Encourage** your school to become a Welcoming School. A Welcoming School encourages parents and the public to become more involved in education by implementing the following practices. Call (800) 928-2111, or Lexington area 233-9849, for more information.

- ✓ Display a mission statement committing the work of the school to students, families, and the community it serves.
- ✓ Reflect an orderly and safe environment conducive to effective learning by students and productive work by staff.
- ✓ Display internal and external signs welcoming visitors to the school.
- ✓ Use friendly language to describe what visitors should do when entering the school.
- ✓ Have designated parking areas for visitors.
- ✓ Employ staff who are friendly to visitors, provide needed information easily, and answer the phone in a way that makes callers glad they have called the school.
- ✓ Set standards of welcoming behavior for all staff and volunteers, including bus drivers, custodians, and cafeteria workers.
- ✓ Display students' academic work throughout the building.
- ✓ Display large readable signs with directions to such areas as the library, gym, cafeteria, and restrooms.
- ✓ Have an identified and furnished work space for parents and other volunteers.
- ✓ Have a cheerful and furnished waiting area for visitors.
- ✓ Have clearly written information available to parents and visitors explaining school philosophy and programs and how a person can be involved.
- ✓ Have an outside marquee, readable from the street, which carries notices of meetings, and recognition of students/staff/organizations.
- ✓ Allow staff to be easily accessible to parents.
- ✓ Produce a climate that is cheerful and student-centered.
- ✓ Ensure that students demonstrate friendly and courteous behavior.

★ **Organize a Parents and Teachers Talking Together** **(PT3)** for your school. This is a meeting where teachers and parents discuss goals for children in their school and actions to achieve those goals. Contact the Prichard Committee community support coordinator serving your county (see page 82) or call (800) 928-2111, or Lexington area 233-9849, or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.

★ **Run** for a seat on your school council or your school board. If you don't want to run, work to find good candidates.

★ **Contact** the Partnership for Kentucky Schools about inviting a member of their Cadre for School and Community Development to help your community get involved in improving student achievement.

★ **Visit** the Prichard Committee Web site to get a copy of the *Glossary of Kentucky Education Terms*. Share it with other parents. If you don't have access to the Internet, call for a copy.

- ★ **Volunteer** to serve on a school council committee.

- ★ **Ask** for a copy of the employee communications packet from the Partnership for Kentucky Schools that includes good information for parents. See below for contact information.

- ★ **Get involved** with your PTA/PTO/PTSA. If your school does not have a PTA, **form** one. Call the Kentucky PTA office at (502) 564-4378.

- ★ **Plan** a minority parent workshop. Contact the Division of Minority Educator Recruitment and Retention at (502) 564-1479 for more information.

- ★ **Contact** a Prichard Committee community support coordinator for information or assistance in your region. (See page 82.)

- ★ **Stay in contact with your state legislators**. Call and leave a message for legislators on the Legislative Message Line at (800) 372-7181; write to legislators at Capitol Annex, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601; send an e-mail message. The Legislative Research Commission Web site at www.lrc.state.ky.us has a section called "Finding and contacting legislators" that provides names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses (for those members who use e-mail).

- ★ **Contact** Forward in the Fifth (5th Congressional District) to get involved with their school support programs, (859) 986-3696.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

- **Kentucky Congress of Parents and Teachers** at (502) 564-4378.
- **Kentucky Department of Education** at 800-533-5372 or visit the Web site at www.kde.state.ky.us.
- **Partnership for Kentucky Schools**, 600 Cooper Drive, Lexington, KY 40502; (859) 455-9595; e-mail: admin@pfks.org, or visit the Web site at www.pfks.org.
- **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence**, P.O. Box 1658, Lexington, KY 40588-1658; (859) 233-9849 or (800) 928-2111; e-mail: admin@prichardcommittee.org or visit the Web site at www.prichardcommittee.org.

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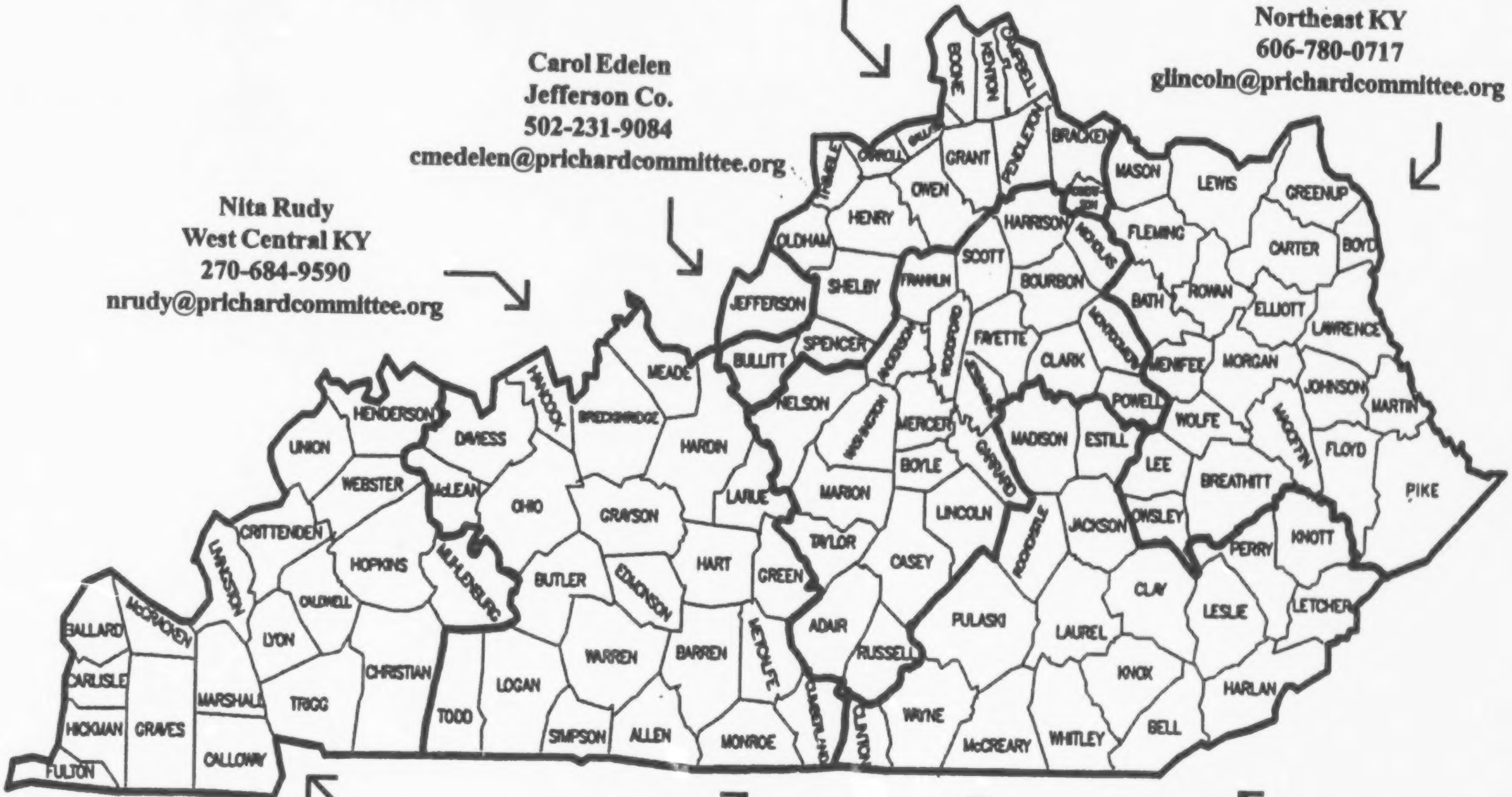
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